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Rutherford County Historical Society

Publication No. 6



FATE SANDERS HOME



Winter 1976

Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130

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RUTHERFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PUBLICATION NO. 6

February, 1976

The Cover - This home, constructed in 1868 by Asa Houston Sanders and subsequently known as the Fate Sanders home, was abandoned when the Percy Priest Dam Reservoir was established. Before demolition crews moved into the area, vandals struck and the house was burned. It was located on land adjacent to and north of the former Sewart Air Force Base and near the Fate Sanders Boat Ramp. The sketch was prepared by Adock. Those who were associated with the house do not recall the first name of the artist nor the circumstances leading to the preparation of the sketch.

Published by
Rutherford County Historical Society
Murfreesboro, Tennessee
1976

THANKS - To Rutherford County Judge Ben Hall McFarlin, Mavis Hartman, and Susan Jones for their assistance in the technical aspects of preparing Publication No. 6 for printing.

RUTHERFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PUBLICATION NO. 6

Published by the

RUTHERFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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RUTHERFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PUBLICATION NO. 6

FOREWORD

On December 17, 1970 the Rutherford County Historical Society was reorganized with eight people present. Since that time we have grown to over 150 members dedicated to preserving and publishing the history of Rutherford County for future generations to enjoy. Our publications have been subscribed to by people across America and abroad.

With outstanding monthly programs the Society continues to grow. On our 10th. anniversary, in 1980, we expect to be the largest and most progressive historical society in Tennessee.

Sue M. Ragland

DEDICATION

Publication No. 6 is dedicated to Mr. Henry G. Wray formerly of Smyrna and now living in California. He was the First president of the Rutherford County Historical Society and served as the County Archivist. The first five issues of the Rutherford County Historical Society Publications were due to his efforts and time. He worked many hours and traveled extensively over Rutherford County from 1969 until the spring of 1975 helping assemble the data for the three volumes of cemetery records on our county. During this time he also aided many people in their quest for genological data. During 1973 and 1974 he contributed a short article each week on the county history to the Sunday Daily News Journal. Besides these tasks Mr. Wray was involved in numerous other projects related to Rutherford County and its history.

Henry Gobel Wray was born August 11, 1905 in Nashville, Tennessee, the son of Granville Moody Wray and Amelia Gobel Wray. His father was born in Williamson County. His grandfather was Richard Robinson Wray of the Almaden area of Rutherford County. Henry Wray was also a descendant of the Haynes and Robinson families of early Rutherford County.

In 1909 Mr. Wray's parents moved to Birmingham, Ala. and he was raised there. He attended the public schools in Birmingham until 1920, when he enrolled at Castle Heights Military Academy at Lebanon for the last two years of High School.

He began work in 1922 with the engineering department of the Alabama Power Company. In 1924 he moved to Washington D.C. and was employed by the Federal Government while he attended Law School there. In 1926 he returned to Birmingham to the Alabama Power Company and was married in 1927.

Mr. Wray married Elizabeth Gaines O'Neill in February 1927. She was born in Nashville in 1909 the daughter of Joseph Thomas O'Neill and Mary Elizabeth Freese. She was a descendant of Lent Brown a preacher and Nancy Windrow both of Rutherford County. Henry and Elizabeth Wray had two sons. Henry Granville Wray was born in January 1928 and John Thomas Wray was born in September 1929.

In April 1934 he was employed by the Tennessee Valley Authority in the Maps and Surveys Division. Mr. Wray remained with TVA until 1941 when he moved to California. In 1947 he came back to Nashville for three years and then returned to California to work with an engineering firm, until he retired in 1968. At that time he moved to Smyrna, Tennessee to be able to do Genealogical research.

Now in 1975 he has returned to California to be near his children and grandchildren and enjoy the milder climate. He is expected to contribute some articles for future publications of the Historical Society.

BY

E. K. Johns

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A HISTORY
OF THE LINK COMMUNITY
OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY
TENNESSEE

FOREWORD

In writing this short history of the Link Community, a special effort has been made to record those events which would normally go into the history of any community. And in addition to that the writer has tried to record other items which will probably be of interest only to those who are familiar with this community and have been a part of it.

The author would like to use this as a means of expressing his appreciation of the Link Community, for the privilege of spending the first 21 years of his life there and for the many fine examples of loyalty to God and country exemplified by many who have lived their lives in this fine community.

A HISTORY OF THE LINK COMMUNITY
OF
RUTHERFORD COUNTY, TENNESSEE
BY HOLLIS WESTBROOKS

+++++

LINK is one of the smaller communities of Rutherford County and is located twelve miles due south-west of Murfreesboro in the Fourteenth Civil District, adjacent to the Bedford County line.

It is thought that the name was derived from the fact that it is located about mid-way between two older communities, Midland and Versailles, thus filling a gap or becoming a link in a line of general merchandise stores which existed at the time. The general store in those days became the heart of the community.

A list of merchants who have done business at Link begins with Elbert (Bud) Smotherman who operated the first store and sold goods from a large room of the house in which he and his family lived in 1885.

He was followed by Bill Gentry who sold goods from the first store building ever erected at Link. This building was located on the west side of the road which leads north from Old Leb Church, at the second turn of that road. It was built in the year 1889.

Mr. Gentry sold out to Bascomb Holden in 1896 and Mr. Holden operated until 1898 when the store and its contents were destroyed by fire.

In the year 1899 Charles Houston Williams built a new store



New Zion Church of Christ



Old Leb Methodist Church



Oak Grove School House



The store at Link
(Now in Cannonsburgh)



The Old Poplar



Oak Grove School House

building just across the road from the old site where he sold goods until May 28, 1900 when he was cut down by typhoid fever. Mr. Williams was said to have been a very promising young man and a very enterprising merchant. He was very popular in the community and the name of Houston Williams was kept alive so long as that generation lived.

After the death of Mr. Williams, a partnership of Westbrooks and Williams followed. John Westbrooks and James M. Williams made up the members of that firm.

J. M. Williams was doing business at Midland and was considered to be one of the best merchants in the country, a fact which led Mr. Westbrooks to seek him out as a partner. This partnership continued for a period of some twelve years when the Williams interest was bought by Westbrooks. This partnership proved to be successful due to the fact that it increased the buying and selling power of both stores.

Westbrooks operated as a sole proprietary until his health failed in 1928. He proved to be a very successful merchant also, even though he was well known for his conservatism. He served the community well by supplying their needs for food, shoes, clothing and many items of hardware, doing what should be termed a general credit business, yet during the twenty-eight years of operation lost only \$4.85 due to bad debts. This outstanding record was due, nodoubt, to his keen observation and knowledge of people in the community. This record speaks well also for the people of the community and their basic honesty.

After his health failed in 1928 he sold the business to a partnership composed of Dorris Smotherman and Fred Westbrooks who conducted it until 1934 at which time they sold to F. L. (Lester) Westbrooks

who continued the operation until the time of his death in 1961.

In 1950 Mrs. Lula Jackson erected the third store building at Link. It was located just back of the second one and just across a new stretch of road that had been built which eliminated the sharp curve in the road where the Westbrook's store was located. Mrs. Jackson sold goods from this store until 1958 when Lester bought her stock of goods and moved his own stock into her building. He continued to sell from this stand until the time of his death.

Agatha Smotherman Westbrook, widow of Lester, then took over the operation of the store for some two or three years when she sold out to her daughter, Mr. Billy Gil Lamb. Mrs. Lamb operated for a short time and closed the business, leaving Link without a general merchandise store for the first time in eighty odd years.

Link was a United States Postoffice from 1890 until the year 1905, mail being distributed from the store and the merchant serving as Postmaster. The exact date of its establishment was April 15th. and the first postmaster was Wm. H. H. Gentry who served until 1896 when he sold the store to Bascomb Holden. Mr. Holden then served until the store was destroyed by fire in 1898.

After a new store was erected across the road the postoffice business was conducted from that location, with Houston Williams serving as postmaster, until the time of his death in 1900. John Westbrook then became the fourth and last postmaster ever to serve at Link.

The postoffice was discontinued Dec. 7, 1905 when a rural route

was established. This route originated at Christiana and was designated as Christiana, Route 1. Prior to the establishment of this route, mail was brought in to the Link office by horse-back riders and first came from Rover in Bedford County. During the later years it was brought in from Rockvale by Los Maxwell.

The first rural carrier on Route 1 was Noble D. Ellis who served from the time the route was established until the time of his retirement in 1933.

Jessee Grant Sugg succeeded Mr. Ellis and served until the time of his retirement in 1960.

An interesting historical note is that Mr. Sugg was the Great-grand son of James Grant, an engineer, who was in charge of building the N & C Railroad. Mr. Grant was a third cousin of U. S. Grant President of the United States. Engineer Grant was also authorized to name the rail stops between Nashville and Chattanooga. It is a well established fact that the Town of Christiana was named for a black woman "Christina" who cooked and fed the railroad hands so well that they felt she deserved having the town named for her.

Mr. Grant built his home in the village and lived there for some years after the railroad was completed. He and his wife are buried in unmarked graves back of the Christiana Presbyterian Church.

During the latter years of Mr. Sugg's tenure as a carrier he suffered poor health and his wife, Estelle, served as substitute carrier and delivered the mail to Link for some four or five years.

Next to serve as carrier was Robert Comer, who served from 1960 to

1974 when he retired.

Mr. Comer was succeeded by Frances Sugg Becton, daughter of Jesse Grant Sugg, who is at the present time delivering the mail to the community.

Link probably reached the peak of its prosperity in 1915 and continued until the time of the Great Depression of 1929. During this period Link not only had the prosperous general store but could boast a first class blacksmith shop as well as a grist mill and feed mill.

Link's blacksmith shop was probably one of the best in the county. It was owned and operated by Alson Spence, who followed the smithing trade all his life. His shop was located some fifty yards west of the store, on the exact spot where the first store had been built some 25 years before. The building was erected by John Westbrooks and leased to Mr. Spence for his smithing operation.

Prior to this time Mr. Spence had occupied two other shops, one of which was located about 300 yards west of Old Leb. Church on the Barton Smotherman farm and later known as the John Wright or Frank Jackson place. Mr. Spence was operating this shop at the turn of the century and probably some time before.

Only a few feet back of the shop at this location stood a giant oak, which during the author's boyhood days became the "Spreading Chestnut Tree" under which the "Village Smithy" stood and the muscles of Mr. Spence's arms easily became those which were as strong as Iron Bands in the wellknown poem.

The next location of Spence's Shop was about 1000 feet north of the

site of Oak Grove Schoolhouse.

Mr. Spence spent his entire life in the smithing business serving the needs of the people in the Link community. His experience in the profession was wide and varied. He was expert at building and rebuilding wagon and buggy wheels, possessing every tool needed in that operation. He made andirons and pokers, stocked bull-tongues, sharpened calf-tongues, made double-shovels and shod horses. He was an expert welder of iron and is said to have been able to mend anything but a broken heart. He painted buggies and wagons, making them look like new. Tempering of metals was elementary with him as he performed this feat by heating red hot and then controlling the time of cooling by dipping into water at the proper time. He used a "Bellows" for pumping air to the coal-fire in which he would heat the metals. This method was considered out of date even then but he never gave it up. More modern methods were already in use and consisted of a high-speed fan turned by gears and powered by a crank.

Mr. Spence continued to operate this shop until he became a very elderly man and served the people well during his entire life. At his death the shop was taken over and operated by his son Tom Spence.

Another enterprising business flourished at Link, beginning in 1915 when a three way partnership was formed by William Carrol Pope, Thomp Smotherman and John Wright to build a Grist Mill and Feed Mill. The building was erected about 50 yards south of the store building which had been erected in 1899. The machinery for this operation was bought from John Wright's brother, Will, who had operated a similar mill at Bell Buckle for a short time. This trio soon won a reputation

as millers over a wide area. The equipment installed was some of the best ever seen in the area and they could grind a turn of corn into corn-meal in half the time required by most country mills. Their reputation soon spread all over the country and patrons were coming from miles around to patronize them. The fee used by millers of that time was called "Tolling", which consisted of taking a part of each turn as payment for the grinding. This as I remember was one eighth of the total amount but a good way to start an argument with oldtimers is to make a statement as to exactly what the amount was, nearly everybody remembers it differently. There was never any question about the tolling habits of the mill at Link but there were wild stories about some other mills which had existed in times past, dealing principally with the wreckless manner in which the miller went about dipping his share of the grain.

The advent of the automobile brought improved roads and the trading habits of rural communities shifted to larger centers where greater stores of goods and wider range of services existed, making it difficult for the rural businessman to compete and so these once prosperous businesses of Link, like those of many other communities, disappeared from the face of the earth. It is ironical but the conditions which plagued these small rural towns and villages, now have to be reckoned with by merchants and business men located in the Countyseat Centers.

EARLY SETTLERS in the Link community include: Smothermans, Popes, Wrights, Rowlands, Garretts, Boyces, Westbrooks, Butts, Carltons, Williams, Douglas, Whitworth, Courseys, Haskins, Lambs, Haynes, Holdens, Comers, Victorys, Reeds, Hewitts, Mattox, Mangrums, Pinkertons, Spences, Stems, Mortons, Overstreets, Heaths, Browns, Nances, Ogilvies, Smiths and Harris.

A "Lion's Share" of the credit for first settlers probably should go to the Smothermans who have long since established a record of "Getting there first" and it was said for many years, that if you met one anywhere in the Link community and were not sure of his name, addressing him as Mr. Smotherman would give ninety per cent odds of being right.

Little is known of the origin of ancestry of most families in the community except in one or two instances. Some take pride in the fact, however, of proof of Irish, Scotch or English forefathers. There are few records to substantiate these claims. Origin can mean little after a few generations, since an Irish boy cares nothing about where his pretty bride comes from and the results soon boil down to a mongrel product. Even a mongrel can still lay claim to the best qualities of all.

Although the writers great grand-father came directly from England to America the next generation's blood was mixed on a 50/50 basis with Irish and the third with Scotch (blood that is) and he finds himself nothing but a mongrel (I've been told I have big ears).

CHURCHES

The Link community would be above the average as a Religious, God Fearing place. Most families in the neighborhood had some church connections and made an effort to live by the Golden Rule. Churches in the community played an important role in the lives of the people. There were two churches in the neighborhood, Methodist and Church of Christ.

Old LEB. (Lebanon) Methodist Church played a very important role

in the religious activities of the community, being the first church established. Its history goes back to the middle of the 19th. century when a little log building was erected. This building occupied the same site as the present one but it faced the west and the main entrance was from that direction. After the building was completed the need for a name presented its-self and one of those who had helped in the erection of the building remarked that the stately cedar trees which made up the grove in which the little church was located, reminded him of the Cedars of Lebanon mentioned in the old Bible and suggested that the name be Lebanon. This name was adopted and soon was abbreviated and became Leb. and for many years has proudly worn that name.

The ground on which the little church was built was donated by a man whose name was Patrick Henry Sudberry (born 1817). Mr. Sudberry owned a farm at this location and the donation was a choice corner of this farm. Its location was in the south-west corner of the intersection of the road from the Versailles-Longview Pike and the road leading south toward Midland. Mr. Sudberry should have credit for an act of benevolence which has affected more lives probably than any other one act ever to occur in the 14th. District.

The little log building served very well for a few decades but eventually proved too small to accommodate a growing congregation and in the year 1900 plans were made to replace it with a more comfortable and spacious building. While the new building would occupy the same location the main entrance would be from the East. Mr. Zach. Jackson of the Longview neighborhood was employed to erect this building and it is said that he was so proficient in his trade that he cut every stick of the framing which went into the building while working under

the shade of a big hickory tree which stood in front of the site. He then proceeded with the erection of the building.

Early spiritual guidance was supplied by a home-grown preacher, Reverend Isom Green Smotherman, (1821-1891). This man deserves a great deal of credit for the way in which he faced problems which would have defeated most men. In his early life he was attacked by rheumatism which left him a cripple and he was never able to walk again. This proved to be only a slight deterrent in the life of this man and his handicap was overcome by sheer determination.

He gained quite a reputation as a Piggins Maker and would sit day after day with his draw-knife shaping the staves that went into the making of these piggins.

He would travel to the church, seated on a straight chair mounted on a spring wagon and on arrival would be picked up by two of the brethren who would place his chair just inside the building with the Reverend aboard. He would then proceed toward the pulpit by tilting the chair from side to side and walking it forward. It is said that his arrival was always an impressive event.

In his early life he married Charity Hester and they no-doubt took seriously the charge given Adam and Eve in the beginning to "multiply and replenish the earth" for this one couple had 21 children, all single births, 19 of whom lived to see adulthood. This went a long way toward making this community the Smotherman Capital of the world, as it has been called before.

Two sons of this couple became Methodist Preachers also and followed

in their father's footsteps. Eldest of these was Bartholomew Thomas (Thollie) Smotherman (1860-1927). Pastorates were held by him at Eagleville in Rutherford County, Decherd in Franklin County, Springfield in Robertson County and many others in Middle Tennessee.

The other son was James Lemuel (Doc) Smotherman, born Feb. 24, 1867, died August 4, 1951. He preached for churches in Middle Tennessee which include Highland and Gainesboro in Jackson County, Carthage in Smith County, Alexandria, Dowelltown and Liberty in DeKalb County and Gassoway in Cannon County.

Another wellknown Methodist preacher was born at Link Sept. 4th. 1931. This was D. P. (Dorris Payne) Smotherman, son of Dorris and Roberta Rowland Smotherman. He received his education at M. T. S. C. and Vanderbilt School of Religion.

He has served as Pastor of the Church at Summertown and Pelham in Tennessee afterwhich he transferred to Ashville, North Carolina. He then preached for the churches at Andrews, Kannapolis and Reidsville, N. C. He is at present (1973) working with the church at Greensboro, N. C.

D. P. is married to the former Arlene O'Conner of Charleston W. V. and they have two sons, Steve and Mike.

Many other preachers have worked with the congregation at Old Leb. down through the years and a list of them as supplied by Willie and Jody Boyce is as follows:

T. B. Fisher, M. P. Woods, J. W. Swan, H. W. Seay, J. N. Handlin, J. F. Parsons, O. H. Lane, H. A. Davis, all served before 1917. Beginning

with 1917: E. C. Shelton, A. L. Hodge, C. R. Wade, Allen Miller, Elisha Henry and M. B. Williams up to the year 1929. Beginning with 1929: Fred Amacher, A. C. Parker, R. C. Crosslin, E. M. Wilcox, W. L. Harwell, C. F. Belew, A. W. Holden, John W. Kelley, J. W. Matlock, French Gothard, Tom Rutledge, Jimmy Bass, Troy Bunch, R. L. Greenway, David Lifesey, Leonard Perry, Marvin Napier and Mont Duncan who is Pastor at the present time (1973).

A majority of these men are no longer living but the influence of their labors will, nodoubt, be felt in the Link-Old Leb Community so long as there is a community by that name.

Old Mount Zion Christian Church was also located in the Link Community and stood about two miles south-east of Link on the Rock Springs road. Little is known of its origin since no records were kept, but it is known to have existed at this location until the fall of 1892 when a new building was erected about two miles north of Midland on the road that now leads to Cresent and Barfield. The name was changed to New Zion after this move was made.

This building stood until March 21, 1913 when it was destroyed by a tornado. It was replaced by a less impressive building that same year, this building standing at present (1973) and is still used by a congregation of the same belief but being known as the Church of Christ. The change in name occured in 1905 when some of the Christian Churches adopted instrumental music in their form of worship but continued to be known as Christian Churches. The name Church of Christ was then adopted in order to avoid being identified with the other group.

W. C. Westbrooks, a native teacher and preacher who had preached

at the Old Mt. Zion location, lived to preach at the new location until the time of his death in 1893. Other preachers who have worked with this congregation down through the years include: (1896) J. N. Armstrong, Lewis Yeagley 1900, C. E. W. Dorris 1901, J. Paul Sladen, H. Leo Boles, C. F. Smith, L. B. Jones, E. L. Cameron, DR. J. J. Horton, C. M. Pullias, Lem Jones, J. Petty Ezell, C. M. Phillips, Chas. Taylor, Elmer Smith, J. Ridley Stroop, Bill Cavander, Jack Dunn, W. Douglas Harris, A. S. Landis, Joe Spivey, Chas. Locke, Granville Brown, John Hodge Jones, Johnny Bowman, Gerald Tenney, David Moseley, Clayton Briley, Marvin Brothers. Claud Woodroof and Glenn Ferrell who serves at present time (1973).

Credit must be given also to two members of the congregation who did considerable preaching down through the years of their lives: W.H. H. (William Henry Harrison) (Harry) Haynes and John (J. S.) Westbrooks.

New Zion Church was built on a site deeded to Trustees; W. H. H. Haynes, Paul Jones, S. L. McElroy, W. C. Westbrooks and B. B. Spence by Britain Spence and heirs Oct. 15, 1891 Book 48, Page 169 RORC.

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SCHOOLS

Schools in the Link Community began early in the 1800's but were nothing like schools of this day and time. The first schools were known as subscription schools, which means that teachers were supported by contributions from the parents of students. These subscription schools usually lasted not longer than three months each year. There were no qualification requirements of teachers and many of them employed in these schools were self educated, having gained basic knowledge at home from text-books available to them.

The first such schools were conducted in a little log house which stood about a hundred yards north of Old Leb. Church at the southern boundary of the field in which the Westbrooks grave-yard is located. Nancy Smotherman Westbrooks (1846-1919) widow of Wm. Calvin Westbrooks, said she attended school at this location, when she was a little girl, taught by W. C. Westbrooks (1835-1893) whom she married in later years, after she was left a widow by the death of her first husband, John Wesley Smotherman (1842-1875).

Another school building stood about one half mile north of the Haynes grave-yard at the first left turn of the road and generally known as the Fate Lamb Corner.

Schools were conducted at this location for some few years after the Civil War and had begun to receive some public funds for support. John Westbrooks (1858-1932), who later became one of the merchants at Link, taught school at this location.

OAK GROVE SCHOOL

Oak Grove became the third and last building ever to serve the community's school needs and was erected in the year 1888. It was located a hundred yards north of dry creek and about the same distance east of the road which crosses the creek at this point.

Records in the Rutherford County Court House bear out the fact that a tract of land thirteen poles wide and twenty-five poles long was purchased from W. C. Sudberry for a consideration of \$7.50 for "The Erection of a School Building".¹ This tract was deeded to W. H. H. Haynes, W. C. Sudberry, J. G. Rowland, L. C. Lamb and W. C. Westbrooks as Trustees of the property.

The building was well planned and was built of very good materials. It was of frame construction and was 24 X 60 feet in size. It had a ten foot stage running the full width of the building, with a step also running the full width for access to the higher level. This stage was the recitation area for the school and had two long benches sitting against the wall at the back of the stage. This was the place where it was soon determined whether you had been working or playing.

Four rows of double desks, two rows on the south side and two rows on the north, made up the seating arrangement of the school. Boys occupied the south side while the girls sat in the north section. The desks were small down front and increased in size towards the back. The teacher would assign a small desk to a beginner and he would move back each year until he reached the back seat. This meant he was about ready to go out into the big wide world. Some fell by the wayside two or three desks short of the back.

There was a big bell mounted on the peak of the roof at the front of the building and was rung by pulling on a rope which hung from a hole in the ceiling. Good students were allowed the privilege of ringing the bell to announce "books or recess"....strange, but I do not recall this privilege ever being extended to me. The old bell had a very pleasing and mellow tone and has tolled for a lot of good people in its time.

In the year 1919 this one room school house proved inadequate to meet the needs of the community and another class room was added. This room was added on the north side of the original building and had a porch running the full length of it with the front of the porch in line

with the front of the old building.

Again in 1922 still another room was added to the original building, this one being attached to the rear of the old one and it too had a porch running its full length with a door opening from the west end leading from the old room.

The room added on the north housed the seventh and eight grades while the latter took care of the ninth and tenth grades of high school, leaving the original room for use of grades one through six.

Many fine teachers have been indentified with Oak Grove down through the years and their influence and efforts, nodoubt, will be felt for a long time, not only in the Link community but wherever their students have gone.

A special effort has been made to compile a list of the teachers who have worked with this school down through the years and we have felt some concern about the possibility of leaving someone out, so we are asking any of you who may review this list at any time to please add the name of anyone who may have been omitted.

TEACHERS who have taught at Oak Grove School:

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Sally Miller | Alvin Edward Hawkins | Estelle McFarlin |
| | Hooker | |
| Forest Rhodes | Mamie Brown | Robert Harrell |
| Beecher Horton | C. T. Lowe | Roscoe Westbrooks |
| Lena Chick | Ida Wheelhouse | Lillard Martin |
| Rufus Hale | Carrie Wheelhouse | Audie Bell |
| John Wilson | Elma Stephenson | Grace Bowers |
| Ella Haynes | Dewart Bowling | Oneida Chandler |

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Annie T. Crowell | Grace Wiseman | Lena Gilbert |
| Ruth Pinkerton | Leoma Smotherman | Deborah Kerr |
| Lucy Key | Vanita Smotherman | Myla Taylor |
| Cora Shores | Zelma Jackson | Lucile Scott |
| Sarah Jane Alsup | Allie Lee Pearsy | Clifford Wright |
| Allie C. Becton | Myrtle Ogles | Nelly Malone |
| Cora Wiseman | Lena Taylor | Jeanadell Crocket |
| Annie Wilson | | |

Oak Grove school represents an era or a trend in our educational system. It came into being as a part of a free-school system that sprang up all across the county and lasted for a period of about fifty years. It served the Link community well and a great number of fine and well qualified teachers have taught there.

The fruits of their labors is evident throughout the country and although Oak Grove never produced a President or a millionaire so far as I know, her students went out into the world and made places for themselves being able to compete with those whom it would appear had better advantages educationally.

In the late thirties Oak Grove fell victim to what was generally referred to as progress in the system and she closed her doors never to open again. Students of the community boarded buses and were transported to both Rockvale and Christiana High Schools. This arrangement lasted for the next 35 years and in 1972 the community high schools fell victim to the same so called progress and closed their doors also. There had been erected in Murfreesboro two new high school buildings costing just a few dollars less than the Louisiana Purchase and the State

Of Alaska combined. It is regrettable that some of our greatest successes or mistakes require many years of experience to prove.

THE ALL-DAY SINGING AT LEB

The Link Community has always been proud of the Gospel Singers it has produced and the fact that it is in what is generally referred to as The Bible Belt of the Nation.

Although some names and titles are sometimes given in derision this one is accepted as a compliment, regardless of the intended meaning.

Many of the citizens of this community worked hard at learning the rudiments of singing and enrolled in numerous singing-schools which were held at Old Leb or New Zion.

These schools usually lasted about ten days and were planned to take place after Laying-by time. They were directed by someone who was thoroughly trained to instruct.

One of the outstanding singing instructors which the community produced was Fisher Boyce. He obtained his training at the Vaughn Conservatory Of Music at Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. He contributed a great deal toward the promotion and improvement of Gospel Singing during his lifetime.

He was directly responsible for keeping alive the custom of having a Second Sunday in July Singing, with dinner on the ground. This custom was established in 1915 and brought, as its director, Wade Gentry, a wellknown man of music who originated in the Rover community but resided

the better part of his life in Nashville.

Boyce followed Gentry as director and kept this event alive during his lifetime. After his death a son, B. C. Boyce, assumed the post and continues to the present time.

This event continues to be the most looked-forward-to day of the year and brings back to the community many persons who have drifted to distant parts of the State and Nation.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES OF LINK

Although Link is a very small community in comparison with many others, it seems to have furnished its share of political representatives in the local political picture down through the years. Goodspeed's History of Tennessee gives the names of W. C. Westbrooks and A. W. Leathers as being representatives of the Fourteenth District in the Rutherford County Court in the year 1886. This was very close to the time Link was established as a Community Center. No attempt will be made to mention all the magistrates who have served in the court from the district as a whole, only those who lived in the Link Community and some who lived at points about equal distance from the two communities, Midland and Link.

It might be said here that the people of these two communities have always enjoyed the best of understanding and it became a custom to elect one magistrate from the Midland Community and the other from Link. Geographically Midland was located in the extreme southern end of the district and Link in the northermost section.

W. C. Westbrooks served as Link's representative in the court until his death in 1893 at which time he was succeeded by his son John (J.S.) Westbrooks who served until the year 1910.

I. T. (Thomp.) Smotherman was then elected to succeed him, serving until the year 1930 when W. F. (Billy) Westbrooks was elected, serving until his death in 1947. Roy Wood was then elected and served until 1968.

The custom of electing a representative from each section of the district continued until the year 1968 when a great cry went up from the cities across the State that they were not being properly represented in the various elective offices and their Slogan "One Man, One Vote" was heard from one end of the State to the other. The results of this campaign brought law-suits and out of these came rulings from the Supreme Courts that one man's vote should have as much weight as another in matters of government. This brought what was known as Re-apportionment and the results dealt a crushing blow to rural politics. Civil Districts which had functioned so well for decades were abolished and thrown together in order to form a single district with sufficient population to become one of the new districts. This process almost completely destroyed the feeling of being a part of local government. The confusion which followed was so great and changes made so often that many voters were not sure of their designated voting places.

J. P. (Pet) Gordon was elected to represent Rutherford County in the Tennessee Legislature in 1923. Mr. Gordon had served as magistrate from the Fourteenth District for many years and had also served as School Board member a number of terms. He was a capable

leader and was regarded as one of the leading citizens of his time.

Hollis Westbrooks also served as Direct Representative in the Legislature for three successive terms 1959, 1961, 1963. He had previously served as a member and Chairman of the Rutherford County School Board for a period of fifteen years 1941-1956. He served as Delegate to two Constitutional Conventions 1965-1971.

He was elected as a member of the Murfreesboro City Council in 1962 for a four year term and after serving two years was appointed by the Council to act as Mayor to serve two years of the unexpired term of Mayor Jack Todd, who had resigned due to health problems. After serving this unexpired term he was elected to three four year terms as Mayor.

Beecher Horton whose origin was also near the Link Community moved to Murfreesboro in his early years, after some few years as a School Teacher in the community, and went into the grocery business. He was later elected to serve as Councilman in the City of Murfreesboro.

TRAGEDIES

An unusual accident took the life of one of Link's leading citizens in the person of Farris Douglas in the year 1909 as he, along with some other young men, were testing their strength by raising the drill of a well drilling rig out of the well with a hand crank. During the process of raising the drill Farris' hands slipped and he lost his grip of the handle. The sudden release of energy placed on the mechanism caused a catch arrangement, which was designed to hold the pressure at any point, to fail and reverse the direction of the crank

with lightning speed. The crank struck Farris on the head killing him instantly.

Farris was a young married man of about 21 years of age at the time of his death. He is the father of Mrs. Eddy Holden who was an infant at the time of her father's death. Farris was an energetic young man who showed great promise and his death came as a shock to the whole community.

ERIN SMOTHERMAN

Another tragedy shook the community around the year 1917 when Erin Smotherman, son of Elmore and Lou Anna Douglas Smotherman lost his life in a freak accident while feeding sorghum cane into a sorghum mill.

Erin was a lad of about 14 years at the time and was an energetic hard working youngfellow.

Elmore, his father, operated the mill for a number of years some three hundred yards due east of old Leb Church. He did custom work as well as processing his own crops.

It was this mill which claimed Erin's life. He undertook to oil the mill gears without stopping the team which pulled the sweep that powered the mill. The feeder would duck and allow the sweep to go overhead at each revolution. On this occasion Erin failed to recognize the approach of the sweep and allowed it to catch his head between it and the mill housing, killing him instantly.

It is ironical but this freak accident which lasted only a second

cheated the community out of a life which in all probability would have developed into an outstanding leader, for Erin was a lad who also showed evidence of a promising future.

THE DEATH OF KIMBRO SMOTHERMAN

Tragedy struck the little community again in 1924 taking the life of one of its most enterprising citizens, Kimbro Smotherman, son of Azariah and Donia Smotherman. Kimbro was using dynamite to blast road working rock from the lower eastern slope of the Versailles knob. While attempting to remove a charge which had failed to fire, received fatal injuries when the dynamite accidentally exploded with the full force of its impact striking him in the face.

He lived only a few hours after the accident. He was 48 years of age at the time of his death and was considered to be one of the best farmers in the community. He kept informed on the latest farm practices of the time and introduced many new ideas of his own in modernizing his farm. He had acquired the old home place at the death of his parents. This farm was located on the Longview and Versailles Turnpike just across the road from the Mance Graveyard. An interesting geographical fact is that this farm lies directly on the high point that divides the Tennessee River water shed from that of the Cumberland. Rain which falls on the front side of this farm makes it way to the Cumberland while that which falls on the rear goes for the Tennessee.

THE DEATHS OF JOHN AND CLEM. WRIGHT, WILL DOUGLAS AND LIT. SMOTHERMAN

The greatest tragedy ever to hit his peaceful little community

occured August 13, 1933 when Clemmie Lee Wright shot and killed three of its leading residents before turning the gun on himself to snuff out his own life.

Clem, a man about 32 years of age at the time was said to have been suffering bad health that brought on hallucinations that everybody had turned against him.

On that sultry day in August Clem picked up his shot-gun and as his father, John Wright, was leaving the house where he, Clem, and two younger brothers and a sister lived, shot the elder Wright in the back. Mr. Wright fell on the back porch of the house and it is thought died instantly.

Clem then proceeded toward the store which was operated by Dorris Smotherman and Fred Westbrooks at the time. He went across the fields which lay between his home and the store where he picked up a water-melon in Billy Westbrooks cotton patch where he sat down under the shade of a tree just over the fence from the road that leads from the Link Store to old Leb Church. As he was eating the melon three men came traveling southward toward the church. They were Lit Smotherman, Herman Pope and Glenn Garrett. They travelled in a Hoover Cart and Smotherman was sitting in the middle on the single seat between the others not being aware that Wright was anywhere around. When they got to the right point Clem raised the gun and picked Smotherman off from between the others. When the gun fired Smotherman cried out in pain and the horse which was pulling the cart mistook his cry for a command to stop. The two survivors looked back, saw the gun being re-loaded, took to their heels and got clear of the scene.

Clem then walked down to the store where he talked with three or four men who were there and after leaving the store went some one hundred yards north of the store where Raymond Smotherman lived. Raymond was a watch repairman and had Wright's watch which he was mending. The two were standing at the front yard gate, talking, when Will Douglas came walking along the road and stopped to chat with the two. After a few minutes had elapsed Wright, without any warning whatsoever, maneuvered the gun in Douglas' direction and pulled the trigger killing Mr. Douglas instantly. It was discovered later that the shots had been taken from the shells and replaced with a ball-bearing from a T-model Ford which fitted very neatly into the end of the shell.

After killing Mr. Douglas, Wright made his way back home through the fields and sometime later stationed himself behind Old Leb Church where he stayed until the whole tragic event was finished.

The news of what was going on had spread throughout the community and many of the residents barricaded themselves in their homes not knowing who might be the next intended victim. The Sheriff was called to come to the community and Frank McCrary was soon on the scene with a hastily recruited posse which soon located Wright at the church. Not wanting to crowd him they kept a safe distance away until they heard what they thought was a window of the church fall and they thought Wright was going inside to shoot it out with them. After some minutes had elapsed one of the braver members of the posse ventured far enough to see around the corner of the church where he saw Wright's body crumpled on the ground beneath the window at the south-west corner of the church.

What had been mistaken for a falling window was actually the muffled report of the shot-gun which Wright had pressed to his own heart before pulling the trigger.

The church building was turned into a morgue as the other three bodies were brought in to be prepared for burial.

Smotherman and Douglas were buried in the Westbrooks family graveyard and Wright and his father were placed in an old graveyard located on the back of the farm on which they lived, known originally as the Barton Smotherman farm and later owned for many years by Frank Jackson.

MARION POPE

An accident also claimed the life of Marion Pope in the year 1974. Marion was the son of Jim Will and Lilly Jones Pope who spent their entire lives in the Link and Midland Communities.

Marion was a man of about 60 years of age at the time of his death and had also spent his entire life in the community. He was an energetic, prosperous farmer who had acquired considerable acreage of farm land known as the Horton farm east of Link and in the Rock Springs area of the county.

He met his death while operating a bush-hog which he was pulling behind his tractor. It is thought that he probably suffered a heart attack which caused him to fall in the path of the bush hog.

His death came as a great shock to the community for Marion had long been recognized as a leader in Religious, Political and Civic matters.

This accident has deprived the community of valuable leadership and effect of Marion's death will, nodoubt, be felt for many years to come.

UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS UNDERTAKER-COFFIN AND PIPE MAKER

A very unusual and unique occupation was carried on in the Link community by one of its citizens from about the year 1890 through 1910. This man's name was Jim Reed but he was generally referred to as "Guide."

He was an undertaker by trade and made the coffins which he used, in his own shop which was located on the New Zion or Midland road about one half mile south of the Haynes Graveyard. The methods which he used in the manufacture of the coffins did not always produce a reliable and substantial product and it was said that there was always a great deal of concern at one of his funerals as to whether the handles of the product would remain intact until there was no further use for them.

Mr. Reed supplemented his business with another manufacturing operation. This was the making of hickory pipes which were widely used in those days for smoking tobacco. He turned the bowl of these pipes on a horse powered lathe and would attach a section of wild cane for the stem. This would afford many hours of pleasure to a user of the weed and little did they suspect in those days that the user of Mr. Reeds's second line product might hasten the day when his first line would become a necessity.

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LIME MAKER

Another unusual occupation was carried on in the community about

the same period, This was the manufacture of lime. This business was conducted by a black man whose name was Pin Vaughn. Mr. Vaughn owned a farm which was located about half way between Versailles and Link. At the Foot of King Heath Hill and this farm produced a good stand of cedar which was the basis of his business. HE WOULD put together a great heap of cedar wood on which was then placed a generous amount of limestone rocks, then the whole would be covered with dirt before the wood was fired. After the fire burned out the limestone would be left in the form of unslaked lime. This was a commodity which was widely used in that day and time for building chimneys and many other uses.

THE COMMUNITY CRADLE

During the early years of the nineteen hundreds there was an old cradle in the Link community which played a very important role in the lives of many of its families. It was probably the property of some one of the families of the community but had been loaned and borrowed until ownership had been lost.

Those were the days when Doctor Poplin was taking care of the medical needs over a wide area around the Midland Community where he made his home (after his death Doctor Gordon and Doctor Garrett practiced in the Link community) and it was a common sight to see him jogging by on an old stubby tailed horse with his mud-splattered saddle-bags thrown across the horse's back just behind the saddle.

Neither the speed at which he travelled, nor the expression displayed on his face indicated that a blessed event was about to take place. But then, you could hardly expect enthusiasm from one who had

witnessed hundreds of such events.

After the Good Doctors visit the proud father would then start in the direction of the household at which the cradle had been previously spotted. Sometime the old Rock-a-bye had to be vacated somewhat sooner than expected to make way for the newest citizen. Once it was cleared of its most recent occupant, however, the proud Papa would then shoulder the cradle, along with a great deal of other obligations and responsibilities, and head for home.

The old cradle would then settle down again to become a part of the newly adopted family and would willingly respond to the toe of the proud mother as she went about the business of keeping Junior quiet and at the same time quietly knitted away on a pair of shoes that would soon be either chewed up or kicked off.

Nevertheless this wellknown piece of furniture made a great contribution to the people of the Link community.

THE FLAGPOLE ATOP THE VERSAILLES KNOB

Probably the best known landmark ever to exist in the southwestern area of Rutherford county was the flagpole that stood for many years at the very peak of the Versailles Knob.

It is difficult to determine the exact time of its erection, but sources of information considered reliable point to the 1820's. Its purpose was to fly a white flag which was used as a reference point by a crew of surveyors who probably prepared one of the first general maps of the area. Another such reference point was established at Fosterville, atop one of the highest points in that area.

The flagpole was made of cedar, which probably accounts for its long life. It was supported by a tripod of heavy timbers bound together with hand-wrought bands and bolts. This tripod raised the impressive shaft far above the tops of the surrounding trees, which were of normal heights. Its location was one of the highest point in Rutherford County and on a clear day it could be seen for many miles distance.

It stood until the early morning hours of March 21, 1913 when a strong tornado with winds of one hundred miles per hour swept through the community and felled the long standing, familiar landmark.

The fallen landmark lay for many years where it fell until hunting and picnicking parties who would climb to the summit year after year finally destroyed the last vestige of proof that this proud shaft ever overlooked this countryside.

ELECTRIC LINE TO LINK

The electric line serving the Link community was built in the summer of 1940. This was the early days of the Middle Tennessee Electric Co-op. There was some doubt at the time as to whether the community could subscribe the necessary revenue to meet the requirements of the Co-op since each mile of line installed must produce a predetermined amount of revenue.

Jose Pinkerton, Lester and Hollis Westbrooks undertook the task of selling a sufficient number of subscribers to the service to satisfy the demands of Middle Tennessee Co-Op.

First it had to be determined just what the minimum amount of

revenue would be and to do this it was necessary to know the exact length of line required.

To make this determination Jose and Nat Pinkerton and Hollis Westbrooks took a surveyor's chain, began at a point near New Zion Church where the line would connect with an existing line and measured the distance from that point to Link Store driving a stakes numerically so that any given stake would give the distance back to the beginning point. Mr. Pinkerton pointed out the direction he felt the line should take, Nat pulled the chain and Westbrooks numbered and drove the stakes in the ground. This operation was begun about 1:00 P.M. and was completed somewhat after nightfall of the same day.

A map of the proposed line was turned over to the Co-Op for their study and they commented that it was the best planned line ever presented to them.

The required revenue having been determined by the preliminary survey map Lester and Hollis Westbrooks worked at nighttime calling on prospective customers for the service. Their efforts got the revenue within \$1.50 of the required monthly amount.

Hollis Westbrooks signed up a little log house just north of the store to round out this amount although he did not plan to have the house wired but rather intended just to pay the monthly bill in order to make the line possible. This pledge was transferred to the Billy Westbrooks home just after the line was built. So the handiwork of Mr. Edison eventually shone just as brightly in Link as it ever had in New York.

WORKING THE PUBLIC ROADS

The public road system throughout the county was maintained by the ablebodied men between the ages of 18 and 45 years. The residents of incorporated towns were exempted.

The system was made up of an elected road commissioner whose authority covered the county. The Commissioner would appoint Deputy Commissioners to serve under him and they in turn would appoint Road Overseers whose authority was confined to a designated stretch of road and whereone Overseer's authority ended another began thus covering every foot of public road in the county. The Overseer would determine in his own mind when he chose to get the job done and would announce road working week. He then would procede to contact each eligible worker and "Warn him in" as it was called by informing him to be at a given spot on a given morning for the purpose of working the road.

Elegibility was determined by where the individual had his washing done. This trapped many a scallawag who would slip back home nearly every week so his mama could wash his clothes.

The period of days for working the road I believe was five. Extra credit was given if the subject furnished a wagon and team. Most of the work consisted of digging ditches along side the road for drainage and breaking up rock with a hammer to sort of put a bottom in the mud holes. The large rocks or sprawls were placed at the spot where the deepest mud hole had been during the winter. These piles of rock would then be attacked by a number of men with little hammers who would sit hour after hour pecking away trying to make little ones out of big ones.

The wise worker would show up with a tow-sack full of straw so that he might at least suffer in comfort as he sat hour after hour pecking away with little to look forward to other than getting his time in.

There were others who like the foolish Virgins took little forethought for the morrow. These soon found out that blisters and corns are not always confined to the palm of the hands.

This system gave way to another in the early thirties when the working of public roads was taken over by the county and state. The new setup was under the direction of a county-wide superintendent and a Road Board elected by zones. Much progress was made after World War II when great advances were made in heavy equipment. Crews of county-paid workers were employed and a system of paved roads soon spread over the county.

CHARITY'S POND

Without doubt the Link Community is underlaid with a honey-comb like formation of lime-stone caverns which follow a line on either side of Dry Creek extending from the Pinnacle to the head of Panther Creek.

During the time immediately after the Civil War, and probably before, there existed on the Isom Green Smotherman farm a small natural lake called Charity's Pond after the wellknown minister's wife.

This was the farm on which this couple reared the 21 children already referred to. Twelve of fifteen of these children were boys.

Aunt Charity is said to have been a very mischievous person. She was also a very realistic person for she sensed the dangers of having these boys using the lake as a swimming hole and had forbidden it.

One day she discovered her own boys along with several other neighborhood boys all in the pond having the time of their lives. She slipped to the shore where they had left their clothes, gathered all their garments and took off for the house without being discovered in the act.

All the boys had to wait until after nightfall to return home and Aunt Charity got a big kick out of the joke as well as giving her own a good lesson in the penalties for disobedience.

Some time after the clothes swiping incident on a clear moonlit night a strange thing occurred. The bottom fell out of Charity's pond. Evidently the small lake had been formed directly above one of the lime-stone caverns that kept eating away from underneath until the bottom in the pond became so thin and weak that it would no longer support the weight of the tons of water contained in the pond and Charity's pond was no more.

A Mr. Bill Holden who operated a peddling wagon in the area observed the next day that Panther creek was running full and muddy even though there had been no rainfall for some time before, which bears out the fact the chain of underground caverns does exist.

THE OLD POPLAR TREE

The Link Community's oldest living link with the past is a giant

poplar tree which stands some two or three hundred yards south of old Leb church in what is now known as the Whitworth Cemetery. This giant of the forest preceded the grave yard by many decades but underneath its branches lie buried a dozen or more bodies unknown to any generation who has lived this side of the Civil War. Their names are unknown because most of these graves are marked with plain field stones at their heads. There is one exception. Frances Ogilvie's grave is marked by a factory made stone and indicates she was placed there in the year 1823. This great tree is known to have existed and was considered to be a large tree even in the year 1854 when Nancy Smotherman would as a girl of eight climb to the topmost rail of the fence that surrounded the little plot and then swing from the branches of the well known tree. People who were born about the time when the civil war ended and lived well over into the next century said that the old tree had not changed in appearance during their lifetime but looked exactly as it does today.

The writer measured the tree 18 inches above the ground and found it to be nineteen feet in circumference at that point. This indicates that it is a full six feet through.

One can, ofcourse, use his imagination and produce any result which he might desire but it is logical to believe that this old tree has furnished shelter from the elements to many a red warrior who might have stopped under its spreading branches.

Legend has it that a white man who was killed by an Indian was buried on this exact spot and that the tree volunteered and grew on this man's grave.

Be that as it may we do know that the old poplar has withstood many decades of attack from the elements, has lived through a number of lightning bolts and various wind storms and still stands majestically erect with its head toward the sky and presents a friendly image to those of this day the same as it has for many generations who also have had a feeling of friendship toward this giant of the forest.

A FOREST FIRE

A very serious and highly damaging fire hit the Link community in the summer of 1936 when two or three hundred acres of fine cedar timber was destroyed. The fire was of unknown origin and started on the farm of William Owen Victory some two miles east of the store at Link. Because of the extremely dry conditions existing at the time the fire spread rapidly. The men of the community not being experienced in fighting fires were at a loss and could do nothing to check the inferno until someone suggested "backfiring"; a practice of going ahead and starting other fires to burn back and meet the one out of control. The backfires could be controlled and kept from spreading. In this manner the fire was eventually brought under control. There were no buildings destroyed but the area burned over presented a stark picture of desolation which is hard to describe. there was not a green blade of grass nor a live leaf or bough that was not destroyed acre after acre.

It is also hard to describe the majestic beauty of the area as it appeared the following spring. Every foot of the burned over area was covered with wild thrift in its varied shades of color as

if nature was trying to make amends for the mischief she had engaged in during the preceding year.

THE STORM OF 1913

One of the most destructive wind-storms ever to hit the Link community struck about 3 o'clock on the morning of March 21, 1913. It was not a twister like the one which had roared through the Windrow community one week earlier. This storm seemed to be only a straight hard wind but reached a velocity of over one hundred miles an hour and cutting a swath nearly two miles wide.

The village of Link was in its direct path and seemed to receive far more damage than other parts of the country.

The store building at Link was lifted from its foundation and slammed against a tree nearby but remained intact. Old Leb. church suffered the same fate, being shoved about ten feet from its foundation. The home of Billy Westbrooks was destroyed with the exception of one large log room in which the family was huddled. There was not one out-building on the place that was not completely demolished or thrown from its foundation. When the storm hit the Westbrooks dwelling it swept all the back part of the house away like it had been leaves, breaking the lock on the door which led from the big log room into that portion of the house. Mr. W. was successful in closing the door only to have the wind blast it open twice more, throwing him aside each time as though he was not there. Parts of the floor of the log room were dislodged leaving gaping holes. No one was injured in the community but this same storm travelled on to Murfreesboro and did considerable damage. A Mr. Jones in Murfreesboro

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almost lost his life when a Livery Stable in which he was sleeping was demolished pinning him underneath the debris.

The coming of dawn presented a stark picture of desolation as far as one could see. Fences, trees, buildings all mangled together with items of clothing hanging from limbs of the trees. Broken household furnishings were dumped everywhere with live-stock wandering about aimlessly.

It is impossible to describe the noise which accompanied this roaring killer. It sounded as though a hundred freight trains were travelling along and bumping together as they went.

It is also hard to explain the mental agony that follows this kind of catastrophe. People banded together to help one another but in sort of a daze with the conversation always being about the storm. They started to build storm houses as places of refuge should another such storm occur and soon nearly every household in the community had one. There were a few holdouts, however, and their final blow against it was that if the Almighty wanted you he'd get you even though you were in a hole in the ground.

Nothing is all bad and some amusing and comical stories arose as the result of the storm. Sam Kaarson Smotherman was spending the night with the family of his friend Alf. Williams when the storm struck. They had all huddled in a room that pointed in the direction from which the storm was coming and the storm got harder and harder with the noise getting louder and louder when Sam decided it was time to communicate with the man that controls such things and this being

something new in his own life he called upon Mr. Williams to pray. Mr. Williams it seems was ready, so he squared off in the middle of the room, raised his right hand to heaven and said, "Lord make us thankful for what we're about to receive."

After the storm had passed and an unearthly quiet had taken over Mr. Williams and Mr. Smotherman were discussing their reactions during the storm and Mr. Smotherman remarked that he was never more calm and collected as at the peak of the storm. Mr. Williams then asked Sam if he were all this cool-headed why did he have his overalls on backwards or hind parts before. Sam, it seems, had put his overalls on with the bibb running up his back.

A MAP OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY

One of the early detail maps of Rutherford County was made in 1915 by a crew of student surveyors from the University of Tennessee. This team travelled every public road in the county, mapping the roads and streams and indicating the location of every home, church, school-house, graveyard and store. The name of the occupant of each residence was also given.

The men who produced this map were equipped with a horse and buggy and a drawing board with a compass mounted in one corner. Attached to one of the front wheels of the buggy was a three pronged hickory switch with two of the prongs securely fastened to the spokes of the wheel leaving the third extended inwardly so that it would trip when it struck the crook of the shaft of the buggy and make a clicking noise as it struck a brace that strengthened the shaft.

This click indicated to the map maker that he had travelled a given number of feet at every revolution of the wheel. The operator would reestablish himself at every turn of the road, determine the direction he would be travelling until he came to the next turn then count the revolutions of the wheel as indicated by the clicker, filling in on the master copy the distance and direction at each turn. Although this equipment was rather simple it was very efficient and left room only for error on the part of the operator.

A few copies of this map are still in existence and a portion which includes the Link community is reproduced on the next page as evidence.



THE HUTSON BARITE AND LEAD MINE

On Nov. 17, 1911 a widow, Mrs. Ada Hutson, and her three young children moved into the Link community having bought a farm about one mile due north of the village. The house on this farm rested at the foot of a high hill known as the Joe Cook hill.

Shortly after moving to this new location the son, Arthur, a boy of about twelve, while hunting for rabbit discovered a strange looking white rock lying on the surface about two hundred yards north of the house.

Having a great deal of boyish curiosity he broke the white rock and to his great surprise found a lump of bright metal embedded in it.

This discovery was noised abroad and for the next 18 or 20 years prospector after prospector visited the community no doubt with visions of hitting it rich. They used every device available in that day in their search for the shiny metal.

This went on until the early days of the great depression when Stanley Overall of Murfreesboro, not being a miner but having the necessary courage to try, took an option on the farm, hired a crew of local men who had no experience in this kind of thing and began sinking a shaft at a point where it was determined that most of the metal had been picked up.

Men who worked in this mine included Bill Putnam, Sid Douglas, L. B. Douglas, J. H. Hill, Claud Watson, Lit Smotherman, and a Mr.

Jack Finley who was brought in as a foreman.

The shaft went straight down into the earth a distance of 52 feet where the metal deposit took a turn to the east for a distance of 40 feet where it was choked out by the closing of the crevass which contained it. Another vein was explored toward the west for a distance of 31 feet where it also abruptly came to an end. Primitive methods were set up and used to lower the workers to the bottom of the shaft which consisted of a large bucket or tub lowered and raised by a windlass powered by a man at each end. This same arrangement was used to haul the ore to the surface.

Tons of the ore were dug and sent to the surface but never went to market. It was said that the white rock was used in the manufacture of paint. The leadlike metal was said to be galena and was noticeably scarce.

Residents of the community found a good use for the shiny stuff since this was the day of Chrystal Set Radios where a tiny wire known as a cats whisker and connected to a long, high antenna was rubbed over a piece of metal known as a crystal with head-phones attached produced Grand Old Opera music as well as any store bought set. These sets would also pick up airplane radioes if the plane flew close enough to it.

Mr. Overall's operation was abandoned because of his death and his lease surrendered to the owner.

Another lease was taken in 1951 by an Eddy Cagles who subleased the property to Mill White Mining Co. of Tulsa Oklahoma who spent

about a year core-drilling the whole area. A crew of five men bored 18 holes as deep as 400 feet. This lease called for fifty years or until such time as the lessee defaulted in payments on the lease the consideration being three hundred dollars a year. In 1952 these payments stopped coming and the lease was purposely dropped.

The discovery, of course, had been listed with the Tennessee Geological Offices in Nashville and as a result there is still an occasional prospector but the core-drilling of the area pretty well satisfied their curiosity.

THE LOST CIRCUS

An event took place in the Link community in 1911 which caused more excitement, by far, than Halley's Comet when it appeared the preceding year.

This was the passing through of Hagenbeck and Wallis Three Ring Circus as it travelled from a showing at Eagleville to a stand at Christiana. The directors must have been mis-directed for no-one in his right mind would have chosen this route to travel from the first point to the second, since the roads in the fourteenth at that time were very poor and rough. Nevertheless the Circus came through the out-side woods three quarters of a mile north of the store. This was, nodoubt, the greatest event that ever took place at Link if you let an eight year old boy make the decision. The procession of wagons, carts and wild animal cages along with the camels and elephants was nearly a mile long. The curtains were rolled up on the wild animal cages and the whole community enjoyed red carpet treatment so far

as seeing was concerned.

There was a wagon loaded with real Indians headed by the Chief and including the squaws, young indians on down to the papooses. To one who had never before seen an Indian this was an undescrivable thrill, I'm sure Columbus was not more thrilled when he saw his first one.

Then someone hollered "The Elephants are Coming". This caused a great stir among the natives assembled because anybody who wasn't thrilled at the sight of an elephant needed attention of some kind.

We had not seen such tremendous creatures in all our born-days and the thought of feeding such an animal was overwhelming. Any two of these critters could have cleaned out any hay-loft in the neighborhood in about two sittings or standings whichever is proper.

Here they came, marching like soldiers, with three leaders abreast in the middle of the road and their followers with trunks tightly holding on to the tails ahead of them on down to the littlest elephant, which was bigger than our biggest mule, headed for Christiana. One of the leaders of the pack evidently had worked up an appetite in his jaunt from Eagleville because he reached out and took the top out of a peach tree on the side of the road and kept step as he continued down the road feasting on half-ripe peaches.

Well it was soon over but I was convinced that nothing would ever equal the excitement caused when "The Circus went through Link.

A CIVIL WAR PICKET POST

Although Link was never the site of any fighting during the Civil War it was, nodoubt, used in the scouting efforts of both the North and South.

There is evidence and proof that a picket-post was located exactly where Link would be established some twenty years later.

This fact was substantiated by Mr. Buck Smotherman who said that he as a teen-aged boy had delivered many jugs full of butter-milk to the pickets who stood guard under a huge blackoak tree which stood some one hundred feet south of the site where the store was later erected. The stump of this tree lasted well over into the next century.

Further evidence of the existence of this post was discovered about 1915 when Ollie Spence, son of the blacksmith, found in a thicket a cedar snag which had fallen over against another tree, which had carved into it the words "1863 Picket". These letters were carved by a steady hand and showed no little talent in the art of wood carving. J. S. Westbrooks had this section of the tree cut out and kept it around the store for years after as a souvenir of the War Between The States.

THE RAIL FENCE PERIOD

Perhaps the greatest transformation ever to occur in the Link community took place immediately after the turn of the century when farm owners traded their rail-fences for those made of woven wire.

This change took place during the 1900-1925 period, at the end of which most of the rail fences had disappeared from the face of the earth.

These rail fences appeared with the pioneer settlers and served that generation, as well as three or four generations to follow them. Few people realize the debt of gratitude due our forefathers who moved into this community while it was nothing but a vast forest and began to hew from the raw earth the community we see to-day.

No place on the face of the earth was better supplied with the raw material than this community. The tall stately cedars which covered the area were ideal for this purpose and soon were transformed into this very essential use.

There was much back-breaking labor which had to take place between these forest giants and the fences which they later became, eventhough cedar is noted for its good splitting qualities.

This was, without doubt, the greatest undertaking ever to be attempted in the establishment of any farm community.

Most of the operation of splitting rails was carried out with the aid of three simple tools, a good chopping axe, a heavy wooden maul and some wooden wedges. After the tree was felled a log of suitable length was cut from the trunk. A good rail was about ten feet in length. The splitting operation was then begun by sinking the axe into one end of the log, the blade running parallel with the grain of the timber then driven still deeper by pounding it with a heavy wooden maul. These mauls were made from a length of hickory

tree which was usually about eight inches in diameter and three feet in length. A handle was hewn from this timber and dressed down to grasping size for the workman's hands. Leaving a portion of the tree trunk about twelve inches long which was to supply the jolt which drive the axe or wedge deeper into the log. After the axe was sunk into the log, the wooden wedges were then set up in the crack which appeared and driven to further split the log and to hold the break open so that the axe operation could be repeated. This procedure was followed until a pile of neatly split rails lay at the feet of the workman.

It is difficult today to visualize the work which went into fencing a hundred acre farm. A well fenced farm required a boundary fence and cross fences to cut off the necessary fields and pasture areas which were essential to a well-run farm.

Assuming that the average tree provided material for a dozen rails and that a workman could fell and split ten trees a day, it would require two hundred and sixty two days of one man's time to fence such a farm.

A fence for containing house-stock was built ten rails high and one for cattle required only eight rails. Many horses learned to jump these fences, if too low, and to prevent this a yoke was fitted around the horse's neck, from which was suspended a shaft about two feet in length. This shaft would come in contact with the fence and prevent the horse from completing the necessary movement to clear the fence. The use of such was called yoking a horse.

These cedar rail fences served at least five generations before

giving way to the woven wire fence and the rail-fence era came to end when the demand for cured cedar wood for the manufacture of pencils became so great.

Mills, known as pencil factories, sprang up all around the country and operated for some thirty or forty years. Mills within reach of the Link community were located at Rockvale, Christiana and Unionville. Although these mills were referred to as pencil mills they did not make pencils but sawed small slats from the rails which were packed into bundles and shipped to Germany, These slats were the thickness and length of a lead pencil.

Transportation of these rails from the farms to the mills was carried out with wagons and teams of horses or mules. There were men around the country who followed this work as a vocation and became known as rail-haulers. A good rail-hauler first supplied himself with a good strong wagon and a team which was able to pull heavy loads over roads that were very poor at that time. The best teams were mules. A rail-hauler took a great deal of pride in his outfit and would deck his team out in fancy harness with brass-knobbed hames with highly colored tassels hanging from the bridles and breechings.

These teams had to be well-fed in order to pull the loads which they were expected to move so they were usually sleek and well groomed.

A number of these rail-haulers usually travelled together so that one could help the other in case of breakdowns or stalls. It was a matter of great humiliation to stall and to have to call upon one of

of his fellow travelers for help.

It was not uncommon to see some fifteen or twenty wagons in a caravan, all loaded with ten foot high loads, heading for the mill. These high loads were contained and held on the wagon by high, strong standards which were held together with chains, then a strong chain going completely around the load and held taut by a spring-pole.

Each rig usually had the owners lunch swinging from the hame of the lead mule, usually neatly packed in a fresh white flour sack. Feeding time was the high-light of the day and while the teams were feeding the drivers would congregate, eat their lunch and boast about the size of the loads their teams could pull.

It is with a degree of regret when I recall the days of the split rail fences which lined both sides of the roads leading in all directions in this community. They presented a highly picturesque scene with their zig-zag patterns and especially was this true following a winter snow fall.

The fence corners which existed every seven or eight feet afforded a perfect haven for wild-life and the favorite nesting place for birds or rabbit was in a fence corner.

The wire that re-placed these romantic rails has long since crumbled and decayed and I cannot but be reminded of Esau in the Bible who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The economic collapse which occurred in the year 1929 was generally referred to as the Great Depression. Citizens of Rutherford County did not feel the full impact of this great financial break down. Large urban areas of the country fell harder than the rural.

Rutherford County had very little industry at the time, most of its inhabitants lived on farms and produced their living from the soil and consequently could get along better without cash than those who followed other occupations.

Merchants were hard pressed for cash but soon adjusted to meet the situation. Very few of our merchants closed their doors. Prices reached unheard of lows and remained at very low levels until the presidential election of 1932. Some of the items that could be purchased at the corner grocery were:

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| 25 pounds of flour..... | \$.45 |
| 12 pounds corn meal..... | .10 |
| 4 pounds of lard..... | .25 |
| a good broom..... | .10 |
| Pound of coffee..... | .10 |
| Chunk meat..pound..... | .05 |
| Eggs per doz..... | .06 |
| Cigarets..... | .10 |

A family of four or five could get along very well on two and a half to three dollars a week for food.

Every bank in Rutherford County, as well as those elsewhere in the nation, was closed by presidential order and remained closed for a period of three days. When they opened for business they issued script as a substitute for money. This script was nothing more than a due-bill or IOU on the bank.

These pieces of script were issued in various denominations for convenience and if you spent a dollar piece on a small purchase you would likely get back pieces representing quarters, nickles and dimes. As I recall no one cent pieces were issued. This script was used for some two or three weeks until Congress had time to take drastic actions to shore up and strengthen the economy and money was restored to its former use.

One of the strange things concerning the script is that no one saved a piece of it but spent it as fast as they could get rid of it and since that time it has not been seen.

Conditions improved slowly for the next four or five years under the leadership of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt when World War II was beginning to rear its ugly head in Europe and by the end of the thirties it was thought the economy had pretty well recovered.

THE HOOVER CART

One of the most interesting and somewhat comical vehicles ever used in this country was known as the Hoover-Cart. It was named for President Herbert Hoover who was in the White House at the time the great depression of 1929 hit the entire country creating conditions that made the Hoover-Cart a necessity at the time.

The cart was created by taking the front axle of an automobile, usually a T-Model Ford, along with the two wheels attached and the spring which had borne the once glamorous vehicle over many hundreds of enjoyable miles. On top of this assembly went two long, freshly cut saplings sometime still bearing green leaves on the first trip

to town. These long shafts extended two or three feet back of the axle and a good wide board nailed between the two made a comfortable seat for two passengers if covered with a tow sack filled with straw or shucks. Between the shafts in front was the power plant, usually taking the form of a mule, which was all decked out in plow harness.

There seemed to be no need for bells, horns or other signaling devices since everybody was travelling at about the same speed and the jangling of the iron traces made enough noise to be heard around the next corner at least.

Hanging from one of the hames of the mule's harness was a neatly laundered flour sack which contained the driver's lunch and also hanging from his hip pocket would be the brand tag of a sack of smoking tobacco, called Golden Grain but more generally referred to as Hoover Dust.

Hitching yards had not completely disappeared at the time and became quite popular again as on Saturdays Hoover Carts could be sighted coming from every direction. During the early days of the Auto old timers would predict that the Automobile would never replace the horse and it looked for a spell as though old Dobbin was going to win after all.

It is not intended to leave the impression that this mode of transportation was used only by the poor people, for that was not the case, since many well-to-do families feeling the pinch of the absence of ready cash met the need for transportation by pulling the front end out of the family automobile.

THE PANTHER CREEK GOLD MINE

In the year 1918 a mysterious visitor appeared in the Link Community in the person of a self-styled Oklahoma Cherokee Indian Chief. There was no doubt about his being a genuine Indian for he had all the characteristics of the story-book variety, minus the copper arm bands and a marked difference in the way he was dressed.

He wore knee-length rugged leather boots with pants and coat made of coarse jeans cloth. His dress showed much wear but was not torn or patched.

His skin was a high copper color, his hair coarse and black and platted into a single strand which hung down his back. He looked so Indian that he could easily have been a brother of the one on the Buffalo Nickel.

Everybody wondered just what his business in the community might be after he had spent some two weeks apparently without reason.

Then out of the clear blue he showed his hand by selling to one of the shrewdest men in the county an imaginary gold mine. The site was adjacent to a big bend in Panther Creek and was supposedly owned by the Chief's Tribe in Oklahoma. He produced what looked like a well aged map of the site, along with what he said were gold bearing gravels from the site.

Mr. Joe Smotherman, a highly respected and very successful business man and farmer purchased the whole package from the old Indian. The rights which were on his own farm. The old Indian, without doubt, must have been a supersalesman for no one had ever out-traded Mr. Joe.

This was evidenced by the modest fortune he had built during his life time.

After the trade was completed the old Indian took off for Murfreesboro to catch the train but before he could completely clear the area, one of Mr. Smotherman's sons, Talmadge, learned of the deal, took his father in a buggy and hurried to Murfreesboro arriving just as the chief was boarding the train. They convinced him that it would be better to refund the money than to go to jail. He refunded the money and took off for parts unknown.

So far as is known this was the closest thing to a gold-rush that Link has ever had.

LAVERGNE
BY
SHIRLEY CHANEY

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The first property in the area was deeded to Samuel Buchanan in 1788 but had been located in 1785 and signed by Richard Caswell Aug. 1, 1787. The 400 acre tract was located along Hurricane Creek, then Rutherford County, North Carolina. The early 1819 map of Rutherford County, Tennessee shows the boundaries to extend far into present Davidson County, and it is easy to see how Donelson and LaVergne have the same "back yards," so to speak. Both communities could share a few of the early families settling along Stones River. Samuel's land was on both sides of the creek north of the present Rutherford-Davidson County line bridge. The line at this point has been changed numerous times through various periods of our Tennessee State Legislature. Both Samuel and John Buchanan were famous Indian fighters and both owned land in this northwest section of the county.

Buchanan family records state Sam was killed by Indians at the "Bluff" in 1783, and that he never married. Early Tennessee history
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accounts such as Ransey, Putnam, Hale and Merritt, and Clayton all agree he was killed at the hands of Indians but all vary the death date. Most agree he was killed by 1788, however, none of these could be accurate since Sam signed a deed transfer in 1784 and was a jurror
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in 1789. His death occurred in 1793 and his inventory at death left a widow named Rebecca.

1. Davidson County Reg. Book A. p. 324
2. Hale and Merritt, Vol. 1
3. Davidson County Wills and Inventories, Microfilm #427, Tennessee Library and Archives, Nashville.

Sam was in a field plowing when Indians fired upon him. He ran while twelve savage pursuers overtook and killed him. The bluff at which he was killed was at Hurricane Creek and he had been plowing his own field at his own station when attacked. Sam came into the frontier wilderness with John, helped settle French Lick, fought Indians, served several times a juror, bought and sold land, married, ect. It would seem more likely that he would establish his own interest rather than stay at the Bluff at French Lick, or for that matter at the John Buchanan Station. His own land along Hurricane Creek became Samuel Buchanan's station and later Buchanansville.

Official Post Office records show Buchanansville, Davidson County changed to Mount View, March 8, 1827, then changed back to Buchanan-ville on January 26, 1837. It was again changed to Mount View, March 1, 1842, then finally to LaVergne, Rutherford County on August 23, 1852. Unofficially it was given several other names including Rutherford City, Limestone, and Cedar Point. The man for whom the city was named referred to the community as Rutherford or Rutherford City. In deciding the date of establishment for the city seal design, 1803 seemed to be the best date. Obviously if Sam was killed in 1793, the danger of Indian attack was still too great to settle in the frontier land. Yet by 1803, ten years later, the new Rutherford County was chartered and County Court was held in 1804. Rock Springs Baptist Church was opened July 21, 1804 and its enrollment was of good size. The actual settlement date was between 1793 when Sam was killed and 1803 when Rutherford County was chartered.

The city was named for Francis Roulhac, born in Limoges, France March 15, 1767. He was christened at birth: Francois Leonard Gregoire de Roulhac de LaVergne. When he came to America, he anglicized his name, shortening it to Francis Roulhac. He was both a doctor and a lawyer but practiced neither profession to a great degree. In his younger life he preferred a mercantile life, in later years he was happiest on his farm.

Roulhac had married Margaret Gray of North Carolina. Her sister had married a Butler who had died or was killed, and she had been given land in Rutherford County by her father-in-law. The Roulhacs brought the sister to "Rutherford" and continued on to Montgomery County. A short time later, "Aunt Butler", as the Roulhac children called her, asked them to move to Rutherford and she would deed her land to them. The Roulhacs came to LaVergne in 1822.

Francis knew the importance of sending to and receiving mail from Europe, the West Indies and **eastern United States**, all places where he had connections. He really couldn't have cared less WHAT the city was named, rather THAT the city retained a post office. Because of this intense post office concern, the community was named LaVergne for him, the day Roulhac died. Firestone is located where Roulhac's home once stood. One of the listed Mount View Post Offices was located a short distance of Roulhac's home. If he could know what had now come to pass and the projected plans for the future in Interchange City, he would be the first to be pleased.

Williams Kimbro and John Hill were two men of means and stature who probably were the most instrumental in setting a pattern for living

in this community. Both men served in County Court, Kimbro's land was south of the community including the top of a high elevation. The land was still in the Kimbro family until very recently when it was sold for community development. The early roads were cleared, laid out, and the overseers were responsible men in the area. One of these roads was a portion of the original Nashville-Murfreesboro-Chattanooga Pike which came through LaVergne about where the present I-24 highway is located. Of course, its route was changed on more than one occasion by economic or population needs and post office site changes.

John Hill, one of the first Magistrates of the County, built the lovely Nelson home which was recently razed to make way for the Long-Bell Industry completed early this year. Hill was a son of Green Hill, the Father of Methodism in Middle Tennessee. Green Hill divided a 640 acre land grant tract between two of his sons, Thomas and John. Squire Hill and his wife later moved to another community. Early court minutes list a good many endeavors by John Hill when he lived in what was to become the LaVergne community.

During the time Murfreesboro was the capital of the State, education seemed to be the prime interest next to and often interlocking politics. Dr. James Priestley of Princeton University had come to the Nashville Academy and was probably one of the greatest forces in setting high educational standards in Middle Tennessee. His home was located in what was to become Donelson, and he had several family members living in the LaVergne community. A granddaughter is buried in the Mason Cemetery off Hollandale Road. In most of the old letters

of the LaVergne Collection, references are continually made to planning and receiving higher education within a 30-mile radius of LaVergne. Public education did not come until a century later.

About 1833 the city was laid out by John Hill, son-in-law of Francis Roulhac and nephew of Squire Hill. He was an enterprising young man who had a rope and bagging factory in Lebanon. Young Hill had a store and saw mill near his home which was located where the Tennessee Farmers Co-op lands are now situated. However, the earliest stores were operated by Joe Kimbro whose store was really a plantation commissary. The Kimbro lands were on a portion of Signal Mountain and surrounding terrain, and the Kimbro store was convenient to the Rock Springs community as well as to Mt. View, Buchanansville, or LaVergne. The other early store was operated by Benjamin Ferguson down on the river bend on the former Bob Alexander place. According to one of the old ledgers that used to be housed in the Hermitage Museum at Andrew Jackson's home, Jackson bought frequently from Ferguson. Undoubtedly there had to be trading posts or other early stores and certainly there was one in Buchanansville near the old Buchanan Cemetery. The old cemetery once served as the city cemetery and is near the heart of the Buchanansville community. The names of the store owners throughout the time of settlement to a more recent time would, more often than not, be lost to time.

The late 1840's and 60's brought a period of time when LaVergne spawned a lot of doctors. This was due primarily to Dr. James Charlton who had purchased the old Stokely Donelson tract. His home contained a post office called Elm Hill and was located north of the LaVergne

community. According to verification of a State highway historian, Elm Hill Pike terminated at the home of Dr. Charlton. As the doctor made his rounds twice a week in LaVergne, he also carried the mail. He had a small rock and frame building in the far corner of his front yard and it was here that young aspiring doctors "read" medicine under Dr. Charlton.

"Railroad interest was at fever pitch," stated one of the early Neal letters. It was the railroad that brought economy to LaVergne in 1852. It was developing into a busy freight stop and was incorporated as a city Feb. 28, 1860. The old station was torn down at the end of World War II, but at the turn of the century it was the gathering place for the young folks. J. R. Park was station agent who kept the station neat and clean. Brightly colored flowers were nearly always found around the station. Park lived in the former John Hill home, Cherry Shade, across from the station and had the first phonograph in town. This was the obvious reason young folks delighted in the station.

The old fort where Nathan Bedford Forrest once trained his troops is now owned by Glen Waldron. It lies south of the old Nashville Pike but during the War Between the States, it was found just off the Jefferson Pike which continued from the Robert Pope place to the Nolensville, Columbia ect. The King home was located between the old fort and Signal Knob, a short distance to the south. Its location was one of the reasons for its being burned to the ground during the war. The fort was the scene of several skirmishes and traded hands more than once between Union and Confederate forces.

According to J. T. Dougherty's "Battle of LaVergne," "General Braxton Bragg gave orders to slow the Union Army down to avoid a general engagement until they reached Murfreesboro. This the Confederates accomplished quite well. General Crittenden's Corps under Rosecrans advanced toward Murfreesboro on the Murfreesboro Pike. On Dec. 26, 1862, he found LaVergne to be a small village with a desirable railroad depot that could move men and supplies closer to Murfreesboro. His men moved toward Hurricane Creek but the Confederate Cavalry under the Command of mighty Joe Wheeler waited across the creek with 2,500 men and a battery of 4 gun artillery. Crittenden thought he was engaged with at least a division so he sent for re-inforcements and deployed his men in line for a major engagement. Rosecrans appeared and thought, too, it was a major battle and sent for Thomas. After several hours, the Confederates retreated into the town to take up defensive positions. "Dougherty states the skirmish became house to house combat as Wheeler's men fired from doorways and windows.

When the railroad had been built through the town, it became necessary for the Nashville-Murfreesboro Pike to be nearer the railroad. This was accomplished by using a portion of an existing road and the new section of Nashville-Murfreesboro Pike ran parallel with the tracks for a short distance and crossed the tracks on the north end of the underpass. A Union wagon train under the command of McCook was progressing toward Murfreesboro with supplies. On December 30, 1862, Wheeler had been making his famed circuitous route when he came upon McCook's train. He attacked at the edge of the northwest side

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of the village. An artist sketch depicts a church in the background thought to be Ebenezer Methodist Church. (Later, the Presbyterian church used the same foundation.) Burning wagons were scattered in the surrounding fields on both sides of the present Highway #41 between the present Tennessee Farmers Co-op land and the old Sam Buchanan Station.

An estimated \$1,000,000 worth of supplies was destroyed and 700 prisoners were taken. Again, according to Dougherty's account, "the work of parolling prisoners, burning wagons, exchanging arms and ammunition, and driving off horses and mules consumed the rest of the day. On the 31st Wheeler continued toward Nolensville burning a forage train on Rock Springs Road and another wagon train at Nolensville capturing 300 men."

Only a portion of the war history can be depicted here but mention should be made of the Mary Neal King Diary,⁷ the story of Kate Lyle,⁸ the account of the October 7, 1862 battle at the Old Fort, the store of Cherry Shade being used as a hospital with its poem⁹ written by Capt. Ira Davenport who was wounded during the Battle of LaVergne, and the skirmishes along Stones River.

It would be impossible to list all the early families of LaVergne-- only a few are listed and then not in any special order: Kimbro, Hill, Buchanan, Fly, May, Nance, Williams, Davis, Goodman, Morton, Thompson,

6. Walter Hoover Collection, Smyrna

7. Ernest King Johns Collection, Smyrna

8. Mary Kate, Heroine of LaVergne, Marian Herndon Dunn

9. Charles W. McKay, Attorney, Louisville

Carter, Nelson, Mason, Banton, Butler, Roulhac, Charton, Hibbett, Gooch, White, Mullins (Mulherrin), Neal, Green, Bailey, Stephens, Mitchell, Hartman, Akin, Austin, Montgomery, Fergus, Tune, Wood, Noe, Johnson, Finch, Seat, Coleman, Ewing, Cannon, Gregory, Owen, Goodloe, King, Gowen, Merritt, Ferguson, Gambill, Burt, Cawthon, and others.

Like its sister communities, LaVergne fared badly during the War Between the States and the reconstruction days were as difficult there as in any other place. The railroad was probably the prime factor that kept LaVergne's economy alive and the people's determination was another factor that kept it going. Education, religion, and politics prevailed as major concerns of the city.

The first telephone was installed in the Burt home in 1904. The Mason family, early Middle Tennessee and LaVergne settlers, had descendants with vision and foresight. Although C. I. Mason was president of the company, Miss Dora Mason was secretary and probably knew more of the whole installation of that period than anyone else. The company was sold to George Kersey and a partner and then later sold to General Telephone Company. The present dial system was preceeded by the old wall crank telephones. The receiver was picked up, The crank turned, and "central" said, Number please." She also gave the time of day, where someone could be reached on emergency, and other gems of information. Mary Kersey and Ernestine Fergus were the best operators in town--they were also about the only operators in town.

In 1925, the city was incorporated again Allen Mason was its first mayor. Later, electricity was introduced and O. B. Tucker,

father of Mason Tucker of the RUTHERFORD COURIER, was station agent and was instrumental in getting the electricity installed. Most new things are met with resistance but the reluctance to accept electricity held fears of instant and costly street lights to the city of LaVergne. Yet progress pushed itself into being and electric lights came to LaVergne.

The oldest church in LaVergne is the Saint James Christian Methodist Episcopal Church organized by Rev. Columbus Walker in 1870. Two of its members in 1972 were Mrs. Elizabeth Trimble and Mrs. Bertha Peebles. Both worked on getting the church history prepared and both were 94 years of age. The church might well be the oldest black church in the county. Its location which has remained the same is near the corner of Highway #41 and Stones River Road. It has an active program and is an asset to the community.

Jefferson Pike Church of Christ got its start in 1920, on the Jim Gowen land on Jefferson Pike. Harvey Merritt and Jeff Owens were instrumental in getting the church started. Will and George Merritt, twin sons of Harvey Merritt followed in their father's footsteps and taught Bible classes in the early church. In 1951, the congregation purchased an acre of land from Bud Pope and the building then on the property of Sadie Charlton Herndon was given as a gift. The building was moved to its present location. Marian Herndon Dunn has written the church history and the full text is to be published in the LaVergne history.

Ira Knealand Hibbett, son of Joseph Hibbett gave the land for the

LaVergne Presbyterian Church. Joseph's will divided his land between his children and Ira's tract contained the "Ebenezer church lot and Road." From Margaret A. Green's History of the LaVergne Presbyterian Church, "the first building is described as large and wide....a commodious building constructed before the formal organization of the church." The church minutes relate the rebuilding of the church after a devastating tornado in 1914 on the same foundation. The original church was established April 16, 1887. In 1969, the original property was sold and the church relocated on 4 acres of land given by Emmett Waldron at the corner of Cherokee Drive and Hilltop. The new church was dedicated Sept. 10, 1972. The church minutes have been taken to the Tennessee State Library and Archives for microfilming. The foundation of the church is thought to be that of the Ebenezer Methodist Church and that one of its part time preachers was Benjamin Sewell King, husband of Mary Neal King who kept the Diary in 1862.

The Miracle Baptist Church grew out of Mt. View Baptist Church on Sept. 22, 1965. The First Baptist Church of LaVergne Sponsored the new church. Rev. Bob Dowdy was its first pastor. The first worship service was held Oct. 3, 1965, with 75 present in Sunday School and 107 in worship service. By the end of May 1966, 231 were enrolled in Sunday School. Dedication of its new building was held May 5, 1968. The sanctuary seating capacity is about 300. Recently plans were made to build a new sanctuary of greater size. The church faces the Highway #41 in the Miracle Heights Subdivision.

LaVergne Church of Christ dates its existence back to beyond 1856. In a letter dated December 3, 1856, Joshua K. Spears reported

in the Millenial Harbinger that the work of the church in LaVergne was progressing. The first building was near the Davidson County line at Buchanan Springs. The building was used and destroyed by the Union Army. The second meeting house was where the old telephone switchboard was housed. This one burned and since there was such limited space at this location for hitching horses with wagons and buggies, Mr. Billy Goodman offered the ground at its present location. The new building was erected in 1886 nearer the road than its present building. At the turn of the century, the government paid for the destruction of the first building and with the aid of this money, the building was remodeled and moved back to its present site. The church has grown progressively and helps to support a congregation in Kentucky. Jon Gary Williams is currently preaching there. The LaVergne Church of Christ is the oldest continuous congregation in the city--125 years. The property is located on the Old Nashville Highway not too far from the juncture of the highway and Stones River Road. It is a fine red brick structure and has ample parking facilities.

First Baptist Church was organized February 10, 1956 and is now located in Eastwood Subdivision facing the Old Nashville Pike. The first lot was given by Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Baugh and the first building was constructed on Greenwood Drive. Rev. J. V. Braswell was its first pastor. From a very small congregation to one of about 400 members has meant a steady and substantial growth. The building is most attractive and seats about 400 persons. An education building adjoins the sanctuary and Nathan Hale is presently the pastor of the church.

The LaVergne Free Will Baptist Church held its first meeting April 28, 1968 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Macon D. Green on Sandford Road. Rev. D. L. Sharp was its first pastor. The growth of the mission forced the expediency of finding much larger quarters and the church used the LaVergne Civic Auditorium. The church had purchased a lot on Mason Circle and when Sewart Air Base closed, the church bought a building and furniture. The barracks type building has been completely refinished on the inside and bricked on the outside, and it has made a lovely and important addition to the community.

The St. Peter Primitive Baptist Church history was prepared by Mrs. Bertha Peebles and Elder D. J. Carothers, Pastor. The Cumberland Association of Primitive Baptists was organized by the Lynn Creek Primitive Baptist Association in 1880. St. Peter Primitive Baptist Church was first named Stewart Creek Primitive Baptist and was located at Sand Hill. Their first meetings were held in a county schoolhouse in 1896.

In 1918 the church began sponsoring activities to raise money in an effort to erect a church building and land was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Ben Cartwright. It was located near the Jefferson Pike railroad crossing and at this time the name was changed to St. Peters's. In 1943, Sewart Air Base boundary took the property and the church was moved again. This time it was moved to Sanford Road.

Jefferson Pike Church of God is a relatively new church but it

11. History of the LaVergne Free Will Baptist Church, Charlotte Green

is one of the friendliest. Its first few years of existence found it without a permanent meeting place. It met in a tent for a short while on land owned by Mrs. Cora Mitchell and was located near Sewart Air Base. Later services were held at the intersection of Jefferson Pike and Old Nashville Highway. In December 1962 land was purchased from Paul Waldron and the church is located on Hill View Drive.

There are only two church histories to be compiled for the city, county, and state records. These are St. Paul's Church on Sanford Road and Sand Hill Church of Christ. Mrs. Fannie Belle Paul Taylor has submitted a fine history of Gilroy Church of Christ which is now in Davidson County but was at one time in Rutherford County. Mt. View Baptist Church also in Davidson County has many past and present ties to the LaVergne community. The church will be asked for a church history for the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration.

A history of the LaVergne Schools by Shirlie Chaney was printed in the DAILY NEWS JOURNAL in the early 1960's. Walter King Hoover included a portion of the history in his SMYRNA, THE CHURCH, THE TOWN in addition to some good research of other schools. Several small or one room schools listed were: Rock Springs, Paw Paw, Sinking Creek, Hollandale, Independent Hill, Sanders School, Tipperary, and Blair Schools but it would now be difficult to determine where many more like those might have been. Often school would be held for children in a neighborhood where the teacher/preacher boarded. In the early days of county education, schools could be found on the property of the persons representing school districts. Other schools in the LaVergne area were located on Sanford Knob, the Johnnie Merritt

property, the Will Sutton property, on the Walter Mason farm now inundated by the waters of the Percy Priest Reservoir, on near the old railroad depot, another near the LaVergne Church of Christ. In addition, there was the Allen and Wallace School for Boys, a preparatory school located behind the "Rock Store" now housing the Glass Contractors of Tennessee, Inc. The Women's College located across the street from the Boys school was really more of a finishing School for girls. It became the LaVergne Academy and like others in the county was really an equivalent to a secondary school.

County records do not pre-date 1925, and from that period until 1960 there was a slow steady growth. From the 60's to the present date, the amount of student enrollment has far out-numbered the projected estimates. When the students moved to an 8-room new school on Stones River Road in November 1961, it housed only six grades. At the present time it has 550 enrollment, houses K-5 grades, and is in desperate need of additional space.

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Walter Hoover wrote, "Throughout this era (1850-1920), down the dusty roads, through the wood, across the fields trudged the barefoot children in search of the three R's and a knowledge of history and the world outside their circumscribed farm-bound lives. Soberly clad in dull homespun clothing and carrying their midday meal in a bucket or a basket, they walked the miles to the rude and uncomfortable and poorly equipped one-room schools." These words well describe the limitations the young people had in those days but there is no way of telling how many mental business giants emanated from these

12. SMYRNA, THE CHURCH, THE TOWN, P. 259, Walter Hoover

humble beginnings.

In 1972 the city again was incorporated and Vester Waldron was elected mayor with C. A. Chaney and A. C. Puckett as commissioners. In 1974 Jack Moore and Joe Montgomery were added to the city commissioner offices. Homer Kuykendall is City Manager and Virginia Frizzell is Secretary. The city was preceded by the Utility District form of government, however, it restricted itself to the acquisition and management of an adequate water supply.

Interchange City has become an Industrial Park off I-24 between Rutherford and Davidson Counties. The land is being developed by Robert McDowell Enterprises and includes several large companies. Emmett Waldron who once owned this land used to say, "It's a good day, but the best is yet to come!" Francis Roulhac, another previous owner of the land who is buried atop a hill in Interchange City would also agree the best is yet to come.

Time has now come to plan for the nation's second birthday and the LaVergne Bicentennial plans have been set into motion. A census record is being prepared by A. C. Puckett, Jr., Jack Moore with the help of the Rescue Squad: a servicemen's roster is being compiled by the Lion's Club to commemorate all servicemen from LaVergne to serve their country: Old Timers Day and Homecoming is being planned by Mayor Waldron and his large committee: a parade is scheduled for July 1976 with Joe Montgomery and Charles Talley serving as chairmen: a city park is being planned to provide ample recreation facilities for the youth of the community: the city's churches are to be hon-

ored by having date markers placed at each church: the business community will have plans for participation in this program with Jim Bowles of Firestone as chairman. The Men's Club and Home Demonstration Club will plan the 1976 Bicentennial ceremonies.

Victor DeLaVergne, a family descendant and attorney from New Orleans is to send the city a tree brought from France for the Bicentennial Celebration. It will be suggested the city plant a Magnolia tree in its park every August 23 to commemorate Roulhac and LaVergne's past, and its promise of a bright future.

HISTORICAL NOTES ON FELLOWSHIP
CHURCH AND COMMUNITY
BY
CHRISTINE SANDERS FARRAR

In the early 1800's Bethesda Baptist Church was organized and built on land given by Isaac Sanders for Church grounds and cemetery, about 500 yards west of his home, on land bought from John Donelson in 1805. This Sanders Cemetery, six miles north of Smyrna on the Fate Sanders road is still being used 1972.

"On Saturday before the third Lords Day in December 1827," thirty three members of Bethesda Church withdrew from its membership met in the home of Cornelius (Brother of Isaac) and Mary Sanders and constituted an independent body which they called Fellowship. The Charter members were: Elder Joshua Wollen, Deacons Darlin Jones and Benjamin Flowers, Clerk Hezekiah Gibson. Other members: George Underwood, Matthew Jones, James Merritt, Gideon Carter, John Hintchy, Micajah Peacock, Mary Sanders, Mary McMennaway, Margaret Jones Sarah Jones, Lucy Hedgepath, Lucretia Stephens, Margaret Freeman, Harriet Freeman, Nancy Lannom, Margaret Barnett, Elizabeth McPeak, Nancy Flowers, Katherine Ward, Nancy Wollen, Polly Robertson, Charity Wright, Polly Merritt, Mary Edwards, Susanna Sanders, Rachel Sanders, Theresa Hintchy, Patsy Barefoot and Mary King.

Even though the church was organized in the home of Cornelius Sanders neither he nor his brother were among the charter members but evidently all were well-wishers of the new church since members continued meeting in the home of Cornelius several months for worship and business. However, a committee was appointed consisting of Thomas

Sanders, Robert Freeman, Jesse Bloodworth, Benjamin Flowers and Micajah Peacock to supervise the erection of a meeting house. Records do not show when such a building was completed but it is practically certain that it was occupied within a year, after the church was organized. It was a cedar log structure and was situated east of Bethesda Church on ground given by William Freeman. In June 1852 a building committee was appointed for the second house consisting of John Wiley, William Meredith, Asa Houston Sanders (all sons of Isaac) Cornelius Sanders, Jr., John B. Goodwin, N. C. McCullough, Moses R. Buchanan and O. G. Tucker. In March 1854 this committee reported a balance \$631.22½ due the builder Edward Bodily, stone mason. In July 1856 a sub-committee was appointed consisting of John B. Goodwin and John Sanders to supervise the finishing of the church with plaster and paint. It appears the present rock structure was completed on that date on land given by Thomas Kirkpatrick, thus the first district of Rutherford County known as Fellowship Community for 147 years.

Written from minutes of Fellowship Baptist Church.

Bethesda Baptist Church was admitted into Concord Association in 1814. Their annual reunion was held at Bethesda in 1835. Bethesda has long since passed away.

Phillippi Church of Christ organized in 1830 on the site of present building which was at that time part of the first district of Rutherford County but now in Davidson County.

Corinth Church of Christ organized in 1867, built on land given by Yank Tilford on the border of Rutherford and Wilson Counties,

known as the Burnett Community. First Pastor was Aesap Alsup.

Freedmans Grove Baptist Church was built by Asa Houston Sanders after the Civil War, for negroes. The building was used 50 to 75 years and its first pastor was Mark Buchanan, colored, who had belonged to Moses R. Buchanan. Mark was ordained to the Ministry by Fellowship Church in 1877.

Bryants Grove was another Baptist Church for negroes built near the Davidson County line in the latter part of 1800's.

Rockdale School 1st District. It is not definitely known what year this school was opened but since it was in a log building on the William Freeman land it is thought to have begun in the building Fellowship Church had formerly used before 1854. In 1888 one acre was given by Henry and Sarah Wood and J. B. and M. A. Bodily for public school which was slightly west of the old building. This building was a one room frame with long porch across front. Some of the teachers were Alvis McCollough, T. Pinkney Edmondson, Miss Jinny Marlin, Miss Amanda Miller, Miss Mable Callahan, Miss Mary Halliburton, Mr. Neal Elrod, Berry O. Carter, Miss Inez Carter. In about 1953 a four room brick building was erected on land given by Geo. A. Patton across from Fellowship Church, this building was used 10 to 15 years before all children were carried to Smyrna school by bus.

Burnetts School, 1st District was built on land of Lewis Burnett in 1851. It was a one room log building. Some of the teachers were Ralph J. Neal, Dr. James R. Major, Miss Vera Burnett, Miss Mamie Clemmons, J. Norman Barnett, Miss Lillian Duggin, Mr. Alsup and Miss Zona Burnett.

It was abandoned about 1900 when the children came to Rockdale.

Scrough-Out was another early school built at the head of Spring Creek in the first district near 1900. A Mr. Loyd and Miss Dora Sanders were two of the teachers. It was abandoned when the children came to Rockdale.

Bryants Grove was the one negro school in the community. Miss Dora Holden was the teacher for many years.

One of the oldest homes in the community is owned by Mrs. J. Mabry Goodwin. In 1851 her grandfather, Lewis Garrett Burnett, bought this two story log house and a farm on Stones River. His son, Turner Perry Burnett, inherited a portion of this land and bought the other heirs interest. Turner's daughter, Ottie Burnett, inherited a portion at her fathers death and she, with her husband, J. Mabry Goodwin, bought the interest of other heirs. In 1966 when the Federal Government acquired this land for the Percy Priest Lake, they moved the house to Couchville Pike where it now stands in its remodeled condition. Turner Perry Burnett, Jr. moved to Wilson County where he has served different terms as Sheriff. Another brother, Herman Tyler Burnett went to Pittsburg, Penn. as a young man to work with the Reliance Life Insurance Co. He became Vice-President and was with the company until retirement. He died in 1970 at the age of 86 years.

Other businesses in this community were operated as side lines to farming. Wm. Thos Barnett, Guill S. Maddux, Wm.(Pat) Hunter, John Lewis Wright and Thadeus Kimbro operated general merchandise stores. E. K. Bond and Joseph Wright were master in every kind of

work in their shops from building wagons to shoeing horses. Hilliard D. Spain had a small chair factory. I doubt there was a family in the first district who could not boast of having one of Mr. Spain's chairs. Wm. Wright made coffins and did other cabinet work. Every chimney, cellar and building of stone can be credited to Edward D. Bodily, a superb stone mason.

Magistrates of the court were Isaac Sanders Freeman, Hickman Weakley Chandler, Hilliard D. Spain and Roy S. Lannom to mention a few.

John Norman Barnett, son of Wm. Thomas and Mollie Hunter Barnett, was connected with the First National Bank of Smyrna, Tenn. for 58 years until his retirement in 1971.

Miss Arline Wright, daughter of May and William Wright, was dedicated to mission work and was the one missionary from Fellowship Church.

Lafayette M. Sanders had the first automobile in the district in 1909.

Copied from records of Christine Sanders Poole Farrar. March 28, 1972.

THE SANDERS FAMILY OF THE OLD FIRST DISTRICT
OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY
BY
CHRISTINE SANDERS FARRAR

After 1766 when Uriah Stone, with his hunters and adventurers, found the rich bottom lands along the river which now bears his name, many families from all sections of the country came to settle in what is now the first district of Rutherford County, Tennessee.

Among the early settlers were the names of Sanders, Weakley, Donelson, Lannom, Burnett, Nash, Buchanan, Ridley, Wright, Carter, Smith, Barnett, Bodily, Freeman, Smart, Goodwin, and others.

Stories of the "Long-Hunters" and "Indian Fighters" handed down through generations leads one to believe many may have come exploring before returning to bring their families, such is the story of the Sanders Family.

A two room log house still stands on the Fate Sanders road about one half mile from Couchville Pike was supposedly built in North Carolina By the Sanders'-if true they were here before Tennessee was a State.

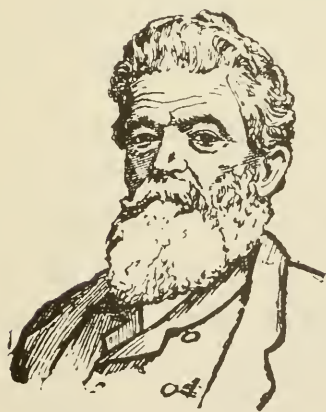
Among the earliest Land Grants were 640 acres on Stones River opposite the mouth of Stewarts Creek to Robert Weakley 1793, which became part of the Lafayette (Fate) M. Sanders lands which the Federal Government acquired in 1966 from his daughter, Christine S. Poole Farrar for the Percy Priest Lake. Earlier owners had been J. H. Charlton and Asa Houston Sanders, father of Fate Sanders and son of Isaac. An 1805 Deed of 640 acres from John Donelson to Isaac



*LAFAYETTE (FATE) MORTIMER SANDERS



*ANNIE GOODWIN SANDERS



MOSES R. BUCHANAN



The Buchanan Mill (picture circa 1915) - Was located behind the old Sewart Air Force Base property and near the Youth, Inc. installation

*A Sanders child appeared in each of the two pictures.

Excerpt from Moses Buchanan's Obituary

"In 1820, Mr. Buchanan settled on a magnificent farm, lying on Stone's River, in Rutherford County. He built in that year Buchanan's Mill, which is still standing. On Stone's River, then a navigable stream, Mr. Buchanan built the first lock and dam at his mill ever constructed in Tennessee." The Daily American, May 30, 1887

and Luke Sanders was one of the first Deeds to the Sanders family. They with Thomas, Elisha, William and Cornelius were the forefathers of this later known as the "Sanders District". In 1850 there were 140 Sanders' in this Community and men by other names were married to Sanders women.

Even though this was a fertile farming area the pioneer had to be knowledgeable in many fields such as tanning leather, making shoes, spinning and weaving cloth, cabinet making, carriage building and carpentry. There were cotton gins, saw mills and grist mills. Blacksmith shops, for making the many required implements necessary in farming, were a part of every community.

The six sons of Isaac and Mary Sanders were land owners and farmed on a large scale in the community. They were Thomas, John H., Isaac Jr., Wiley, William Meredith and Asa Houston.

Isaac Sanders Sr. seems to have been the financier of his family. He was the Executor of his fathers estate in North Carolina and surety on many bonds of other members of his family. His plantation of several hundred acres was divided among his sons. All were farmers in the first district during their life time with the exception of Wiley, who with his wife, Martha Hart, moved to a farm on Jefferson Pike at Stewarts Creek where he operated a saw-mill also. Martha was drowned trying to save a wash-woman who had fallen in the creek. Wiley Sanders' second wife was Virginia Rucker and he with his two wives are buried in the garden of their house which is now the center of the Smyrna Golf

Course.

The home of Thomas Sanders, oldest son of Isaac and Mary, was on Stones River at Spring Creek where a grist mill was operated by water power. Later a stave and hoop mill was operated by steam power where a Mr. McKennon lost his life by getting a leg caught in a shaft. The old home still stands and was occupied by a son, Isaac Summer Sanders, until his death in 1915. Isaac Summer Sanders married Mary Jane Richmond, daughter of Dr. John Richmond of Wilson County.

It was after the Civil War that Daniel Thomas, son of Isaac Summer, went to Texas in search of cheap land but finding it was too expensive at 50¢ per acre in Lamar County, he returned home and operated a general merchandise store across from the mill, and named it Lamar. It was here that one of the earliest Post Offices for the first district was established. Mail was brought in from Walter Hill and Mt. Juliet. The other Post Office was "May Eller", located in the store of Wm. M. Wright on Couchville Pike across from the farm of his father-in-law, John H. Sanders. Mail was called for at these two locations until a delivery route was sent out from Smyrna, Tenn. for some sections and from Mt. Juliet for others.

Daniel Thomas Sanders with his wife, Almeda Word, moved to Nashville when his two daughters, Dora and Callie, became librarians at Vanderbilt University. His son, Daniel, became a Pharmacist, and grandson, Dr. Dan, is now a well-known Pediatrician. Another son of Daniel Thomas was Epps Richmond Sanders who operated the farm with his grandfather, Isaac Summer Sanders. The mill was operated by a brother-in-law, Edward Weston and later by Geo. Patton who met and married

Miss Betty Welch. Their sons are James W. Patton, Prof. of History at the University of N. Carolina and George A. Patton, a large land owner in the Fellowship community and a building contractor now living in Nashville.

Dr. Robley Elwood Sanders, son of Isaac Summer, lived and practiced medicine in this community until he married Miss Annie Randolph and moved to Walter Hill. Another son, John Richmond Sanders, married Mary Frances Jones and moved to a farm near Smyrna, Tenn. and had three daughters. Isaac Summer Sanders, Jr. married Lucy Emaline Sander and lived across Stones River from his father's farm.

Charlie Lenord Sanders, son of Isaac Summer Sanders, married Mrs. Annie Bonds and moved to Dallas, Texas. The Rutherford Parkes Library at Castle Heights School in Lebanon, Tenn., was given by his son-in-law of that name.

Thomas Marion Sanders, third son of Thomas and Mary Lannom Sanders, married Martha Gregory and moved to a farm north of Smyrna on the Nashville Highway. He was named for his grandfather Thomas and Gen. Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox" of the American Revolution, under whom he fought. Thomas Marion was a Confederate soldier quartermaster Tenn. Volunteers.

A son of Thomas Marion Sanders was Dr. Evander (Van) Sanders, Surgeon at Protestant Hospital, Nashville, for many years. He died from an infection caused by a needle prick in his hand.

Leonard Sanders, another son of Thomas Marion Sanders, married Clara Northway and operated the farm with his father. Thomas Gregory Sanders, another son of Thomas Marion Sanders, married Frances Kimble

and is living in Sarasota, Florida at age 94 years.

Wm. Meredith Sanders, fifth son of Isaac Summer Sanders, with his wife, Margaret Barnett, and thirteen children, operated a large farm on Stones River between Stewart and Spring Creeks. They lost five children during the 1850's with typhoid fever, and his wife died in 1863. His second wife, Mrs. Sophia A. Martin, gave him his fourteenth child and a step-daughter. He was also guardian for the nine minor children of his brother, Thomas, who had died at age 45. Yet he was a prosperous farmer, a churchman, and his name often appears on legal documents which made him active in many businesses. He and his brother, Asa Houston, were well versed in law. They were Masons, members of the Mt. Juliet Lodge #379 and later transferred to Smyrna Lodge where A. H. Sanders was on the Building Committee in 1872.

One son of Wm. Meredith Sanders, John Gerome, and a grandson, James Franklin Sanders, became Baptist Ministers, lived on farms in this community, and served as Pastors of Fellowship Church on different occasions. Another son, Andrew Franklin, who married Martha Lemmons, lived east of Sanders Cemetery. Their home still stands.

Isaac Sanders, Jr., born in 1807, married Sallie Mitchell. Their two sons, William and Mortimer, were killed in the Civil War. Their old home, owned by Oscar Mount, recently burned.

Asa Houston Sanders, born 1822, was the youngest son of Isaac (b.1772) and Mary. He married Christine Clemmons and bought from J. H. Charlton the acreage formerly granted to Robert Weakley, opposite the mouth of Stewarts Creek along Stones River. He was a courageous and prosperous farmer, recognized for his leadership in civic, political,

and church affairs. He served as guardian and executor for many, and his name appears on legal documents of Rutherford, Wilson, and Davidson counties, indicating his knowledge of law. Through his ten children the names Goodwin, Mason, Bell, Edmondson, Malone, and Guill were added to the Sanders Colony. Three sons, Isaac Franklin, who married Tennessee Goodwin, Thos. H., who married Sallie Bell, and Isham Harris, who married Lenora Sanders, moved to Nashville where they operated a feed and grain business. William L. married Sallie L. Sanders and lived in the Fellowship community as a farmer and trader.

A daughter of Asa Houston Sanders, Frances Jane Sanders, married Wm. Newton Mason, a judge of Rutherford County for 46 years. Another daughter of Asa Houston Sanders, Josephine, married Thomas Pinkney Edmondson, a teacher at Walnut Grove, Rockdale, and other schools.

Lafayette Mortimer (Fate) Sanders, youngest son of Asa Houston, followed in his father's footsteps exercising civic, business, and political leadership. After his father's death he bought the interest of the heirs in the lands of Asa Houston Sanders and added other adjoining acreage as it was sold through the years, making him one of the largest landowner in the county.

Lafayette married Annie Ladocia Goodwin. Their children were Andrew Hollis, C. Goodwin, and Christine. Goodwin died while a student at Vanderbilt University. Hollis married Anne Baskette and lived on and operated the farm he inherited from his parents. Christine married Adam Johnson Poole, Jr., and they operated the adjoining farm she had inherited, until the Federal Government acquired the entire acreage for the Percy Priest Lake in 1966. This

is now the Fate Sanders Recreation Area. During World War II these farms were used for "Food for Freedom" and Army maneuvers. In 1943, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, Claude R. Wickard, issued this family a "Certificate of Farm War Service". In 1908, Fate Sanders was instrumental in getting the first bridge across Stones River which bore his name, and was used until the Threet Bridge was completed across the lake a few hundred yards upstream in 1967. The first telephone in this community was a Nashville phone through LaVergne, Tenn., built by Fate Sanders in 1907, and in later years electricity was brought into this First District by a right-of-way given across his farm. He bought the first automobile in that district in 1908 - a seven passenger Overland.

In 1869, Dr. Benjamin Franklin Guill moved to this community from Mt. Juliet. He married Sallie A. Sanders, daughter of Asa Houston, and bought the farm adjoining her father's, formerly owned by Wm. Meredith Sanders, where he lived as a practicing physician until his death in 1894. Dr. Guill served two years as an Infantryman in the Civil War before he was transferred to Hospital duty in Richmond, Va., June 1863, by Gen. Lee, where he was paroled out of service in May 1865. Dr. Guill was a charter member of the Smyrna Medical Society in 1876. He had two sons, Hugh Hayes and Clarence Gardner Guill. Clarence moved to Union City, Tenn., after his father's death, with his mother and her second husband, Dr. J. B. Adkerson. Hugh married Cora Jones and they lived on the Guill farm many years before moving to Smyrna where he was Postmaster. They later moved to Texas on account of his health. Their one son, Benjamin Hugh, served with

the Army in the Pacific during W. W. II and was later elected to the 81st Congress as the first Republican from Texas in twenty-five years. He nominated Richard M. Nixon for Vice-President in 1953. He served as Executive Assistant to Postmaster General Arthur E. Summerfield from 1953 to 1955 when he was appointed to the Federal Maritime Board where he served until 1960. Ben Guill is now a lobbyist for the National Automobile Dealers Association and lives in Washington with his wife, the former Marjorie Buckler from Pampa, Texas, and two sons, Hugh Buckler, serving with the U. S. Army in Vietnam, and Benjamin Allen, a student at Princeton.

John Buchanan, later known as Major John of Buchanan Fort, with his father, brothers, and two sisters, joined James Robertson and John Donelson at Ft. Nashboro in 1780 even though tradition tells us the Buchanans were at French Lick in 1779. Major John was a District Surveyor, a courageous soldier, and contributed greatly to the transformation of the wilderness into a great state. Due to his services and explorations he was in a position to secure most anything in the new territory he desired; therefore, he became one of the largest landowners in this section. In 1789 John Buchanan was granted 640 acres on the narrows of Stones River, Grant No. 1030, which later became part of the First and Second Districts of Rutherford County. It was here that he and his brother-in-law, Moses Ridley, built the first Mill near the narrows of Stones River. In 1808 another Grant No. 655, to John Buchanan and Moses Ridley, was for 274 acres on the East border of the former 640 acres. In 1817 a Grant No. 14152 was to John Buchanan for 127 acres East of the 274 acres grant, joining Elisha

Sanders near the Sanders Cemetery. It was in 1806 that John and Sarah Ridley Buchanan's son, Moses Ridley Buchanan, was born. He married Sarah Vincent Ridley, daughter of James and Anne Hamilton Ridley, in 1827 and inherited this land at his father's death in 1832. He built the first lock and dam ever constructed in Tennessee and operated a Mill at this site in connection with farming. Moses Ridley deeded his half interest in the 274 acres to his nephew and namesake and moved to the Smyrna area where the Sam Davis Home, a State Shrine, is now located. Moses Ridley Buchanan was one of the county's wealthiest and most influential citizens, possessed with all the qualities which make a man lovable. The liberality which he displayed all through his life was something remarkable. To him a prominent, wealthy gentleman living in Nashville, at that time, owed his start in business to a \$3,000 loan from Mr. Buchanan. A violin, said to be 200 years old and the first one brought into Tennessee, was owned and played by Moses R. Buchanan. He loved music and dancing, and great was the hospitality in the home he built in the early 1800's for his wife, Sarah, and fourteen children. A beautiful plot by the river, shaded by giant oaks, was known as the "Buchanan Picnic Grounds" and many were the invitations sent to neighbors and friends by carriers on horses "Requesting the honor of your presence".

But when the Civil War came his slaves were freed, provisions taken, land stripped, and cotton gin burned leaving him unable to operate a plantation. He sold his mill and farm, with the exception of 500 acres his daughter, Sarah Anne, lived on with her second husband, John B. Goodwin. Her first husband, Thomas J. Mabry, Jr., died in

1855. These 500 acres were passed down four generations to Christine Sanders Poole, who owned it at the time the Federal Government purchased it for the Percy Priest Lake, which is now "Pooles Knob Recreation Area".

S. H. Miller bought the Moses Ridley Buchanan property for his heir, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Miller Jones, who with her husband, Amzi Jones, took possession of the home and operated the mill for many years - thus the origin of the name "Jones Mill Road" which at present leads from the Nashville-Murfreesboro highway near LaVergne, north to the old home standing on a hill overlooking the Percy Priest Lake at the location of Youth Incorporated.

Moses Ridley Buchanan celebrated his 81st birthday in April 1887, one month before his death at the home of his daughter, Nancy, and her husband, Andrew B. Vaughn, with whom he had lived for the past several years. On this occasion he played his violin for his many friends, relatives, and great, great grand children.

In part this is the account of his death in "The Daily American" May 30, 1887.

"At his home in Franklin yesterday morning surrounded by his friends and relatives, Moses R. Buchanan, well-known to almost every man, woman, and child in Middle Tennessee, passed away. Peacefully as a child sinking to rest, and contented, his spirit took its flight from the body which had been its home for more than four score years, to seek a deserved rest after a life which had been as useful as it had been long. Perhaps no man in Tennessee had so extensive a connection. It has been a common saying that everybody was kin to Buchanan or Buchanan's wife. He was greatly loved by all who came in contact with him. His heart was as tender as a woman's to any appeal for sympathy, though brave as a lion when danger appeared. In the 1820's Mr. Buchanan settled on a magnificent farm lying on Stones River in Rutherford County where he built Buchanan's Mill, which is still standing.

The deceased leaves eleven children, six daughters and five sons, all living in the State. One of the daughters is the wife of County

Judge Caldwell. The remains will be brought here this morning on the 8 o'clock accommodation and be taken out to Mill Creek Cemetery on the Murfreesboro Pike, where according to his request he will be laid by the side of his wife. Dr. Strickland will conduct services at the grave."

Other heirs who inherited lands in Rutherford County at the death of their father, Major John Buchanan, were Nancy Mulherrin, 1169 acres, who later married Jackson Smith, and Henry R., 1120 acres, who never married.

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